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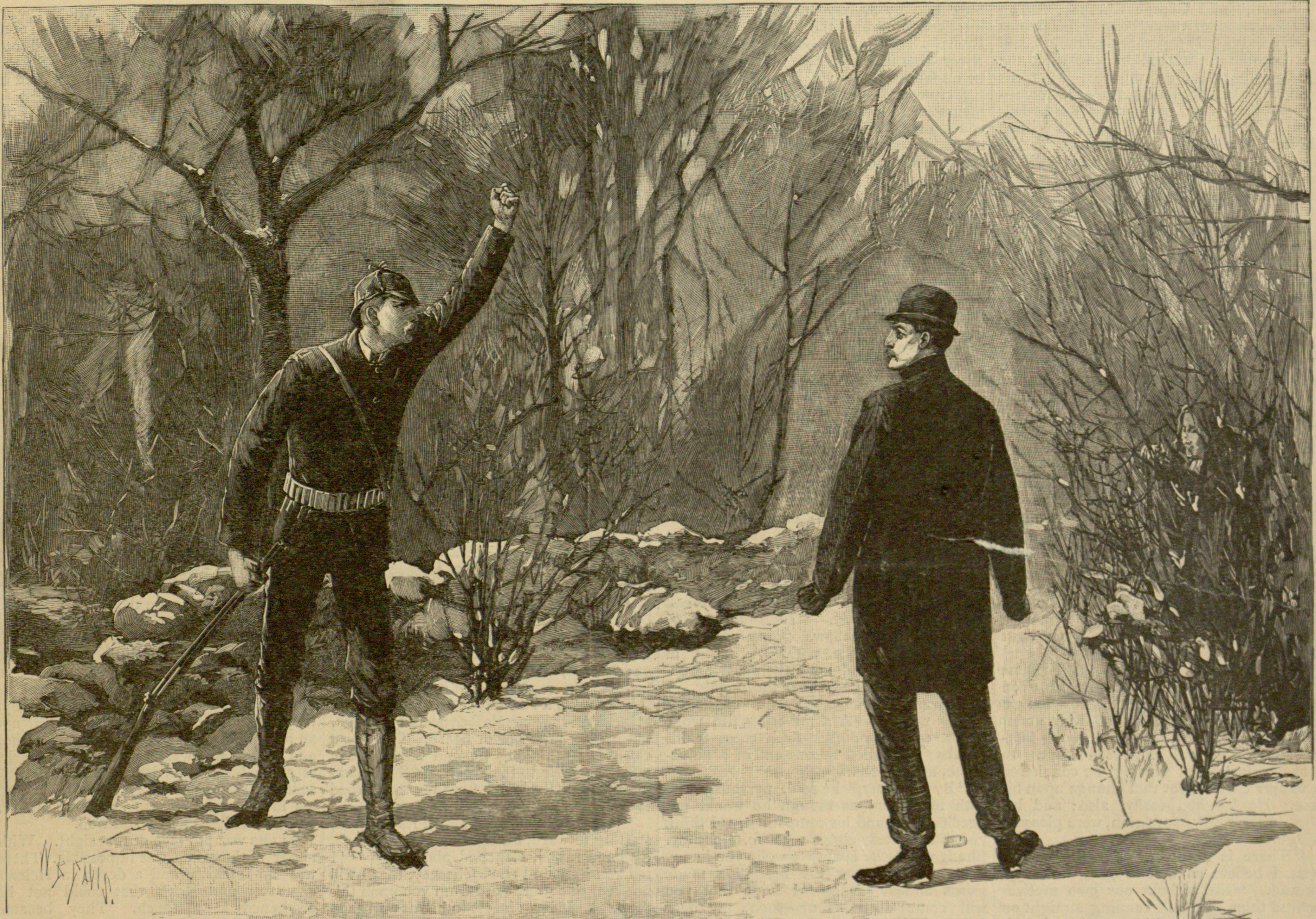


UNDER A CLOUD.

BY JEAN KATE LUDLUM.

CHAPTER I.

A LIGHT SNOW-FALL.

"HELLO!"

For an instant a shadow fell upon the handsome face of the young man pausing upon the crumbling stone wall, one leg over, the other about to follow, when he uttered this exclamation. A rifle was poised lightly over one broad shoulder, and the blue hunting-suit he wore showed to the best advantage his slender, well-built figure.

"Hel-lo!" was the half-laughing rejoinder, as another young man appeared in the hollow beyond the wall. A light snow had fallen, and no path was discernible through the scraggy bushes. "Hello, Hilton! You fellows have a fine day for the rabbit-hunt. Bagged anything? Where are the others? It's a deuce of a shame that I couldn't join you, but—" He shrugged his shoulders suggestively, as he held out his hand to the young man on the fence.

For the space of a breath, Hilton did not claim the outstretched hand. There was a peculiar expression in his blue eyes and a sudden compression of the lips under the blond mustache. Then he laughed half-constrainedly and accepted the proffered hand.

"Yes, the day *is* fine, Chesney," he replied, with assumed carelessness. "This light snow makes it fine for the rabbits, but the animals themselves—"

Chesney laughed in great amusement.

"After all, Hilton, perhaps the fellow who could not take time for hunting because of a business engagement is as well off as the fellow who couldn't hunt because the rabbits wouldn't come out."

Then a swift change came over his face. His eyes, always keen in the presence of this man, were peculiarly so now. A frown marred the frank, good-natured face.

"By George!" he said, with sudden vehemence. "Hilton, you may thank your lucky stars that your business relations do not bring you in contact with such persons as those with whom I have just been. Old Hardman—I told you about him, you remember, when I wrote you fellows, sending my regrets—it was with him my engagement has been. I wrote you that, too. He's the miserliest of misers! Diogenes, without philosophy, living in an old tub of a house, with a lantern of greed, seeking every honest man's money. I always have the creeps when with him. So grasping, you know. A man might expect his old, thin fingers to close pretty tight about his throat if there could be any money obtained. Ugh! And that niece of his is a veritable Delilah. Deuce take them! I feel lowered in my own estimation whenever business brings me in contact with them!"

"You said you had some disagreeable business to transact with him, I remember," said Hilton, slowly. A strange slowness for this man. "You described it very graphically in your letter. Some distance back here, isn't it? You described it pretty thoroughly."

Chesney laughed. Then a frown crossed his face.

"Yes," he said, half angrily. "A mighty disagreeable business his always is, I can tell you, Hilton! He's a man I would fear if there were just cause against me with him. He would have no pity. And—he's afraid of me, of *me*, think of it!"

The young man laughed now—his own old cheery laugh that made him such a pleasant fellow, and pushed the snow aside with one boot, as though so he would push away any shadow from their conversation.

"And it was for him—so you wrote—that you must give up our party, Chesney. Why didn't you let him whistle for you until to-morrow, any way? You would have enjoyed the hunt extremely."

"Even without the game!" said Chesney, easily. "But you see, Hilton, we business men cannot do as we would; we have to yield to the wishes of our clients a little. We have his affairs, my partner and I, and, as he demanded my presence upon important business, I had to come. That is business, you know."

Silence for a moment. Somewhere, deeper in the woods, a squirrel uttered his short, staccato bark. A scurry of light, biting wind swept down through the long aisles of birch and oak, crackling the dry leaves upon the gray boughs and whirling a slight glitter of snow from the ground around and around their feet. Save for these noises, there was almost the coldness and hush of death in the great, lonely woods. The sky was very blue overhead; the snow was spotless as it stretched away as far as the eye could reach, save where the marks of each man's footsteps cut down to the moss and dead leaves beneath.

The silence was growing awkward for both, each instinctively recalling how much the other had to do with his life, and it must at once be broken or leave them in its power.

"Well," said George Chesney, feeling this weight upon them, beating his hands swiftly and lightly together that they should not become benumbed by the cold, the shadow that seemed reflected from his companion's face lifting from his own—"well, this is an insinuating wind, Hilton. I must be off to Nyack. I walked through the woods from Nanuet to old Hardman's house—a pretty long walk, to be sure, but for a fellow like myself, who is shut up all day in the office or in some stuffy court, it is a regular outing, you see! I'm not so hard to please as you fellows who have no one's wishes to consider. Of course, necessity is the master of the world's arts, they say; having walked *to* Hardman's, I am obliged to walk *from* there!"

"You wrote you would walk and might possibly meet us here," Roy Hilton said, this strange uneasiness upon him. "We hoped this would be the case, but I seem to be the only fortunate one."

"And how does this happen?" queried Chesney, easily. "Where are the other fellows? Ten of you there are, I think? It's a shame I couldn't join you, but so the fates decide for and against one. Taken right out of my hands, you know! Maybe the old lady—Justice, of course—is blindfolded; but it seems to me she falls upon one fellow over and over again, as though she had some special spite against him, and knew instinctively which was he, even if she couldn't see. Perhaps I believe too thoroughly in fatality, Hilton. You're a steadier fellow, and have no such light ideas."

Roy joined in his laughter. A darkness settled in his eyes as they rested upon the frank face opposite. His lips looked almost cruel, shut close as they were under the blond mustache. Then he swung himself clear of the wall and faced about. In that one instant of turning, he conquered whatever emotion set that change upon his face. He laughed easily, also; and his eyes, in their new expression, were pleasant to see.

"There is a fatality that shapes our lives, I believe as well as you, Chesney," he said. "Not without our own motives behind them, but still running straight on in any given line and impossible to avoid. Perhaps this will be proved to you when I say that here am I lost from the others, and the only one to meet you, when we all hoped to have that pleasure."

A new expression swept over Chesney's face. A shadow darkened his own eyes. For an instant, he bit his lip savagely, as though to avoid making some reply other than he would allow himself to utter.

"A mutual pleasure," he said then, quietly. "I had no thought of meeting you here, Hilton. When you spoke, I at first thought it might be one of those mysterious warnings that our mediums tell us of. I'm not a medium. I'm merely explaining my sensation at the moment. It's absurd."

"And you'll say that I am absurd also," said Roy Hilton, lightly, swinging the rifle down from his shoulder and resting the butt upon the ground, one hand upon the muzzle. "*I* think it absurd myself since meeting you so accidentally."

Chesney lifted his head with a sudden movement of suspicion. Was there intentional emphasis upon the last word? He was not a suspicious man, but his life and the strange, unpleasant relation existing between himself and Hilton caused him to be sensitive. Then he shrugged his shoulders and laughed.

"In what are *you* absurd, Hilton?" he queried, carelessly. "One wouldn't expect you to utter such sentiments, and they need an explanation."

"Why—" there was a strange restlessness upon Roy Hilton, as he ground the impression of the rifle-butt deeper and deeper into the snow and dead leaves—"why, to tell you the truth, Chesney, I believe I'm lost! We fellows were up on a ridge where the undergrowth was pretty thick, and we disagreed regarding the traces of rabbits, and, as I was in the utter minority of *one*, I turned off to the right to put my ideas into practice and justify my claims, leaving the others to go in the opposite direction. We were to meet at the break in the woods back on the Nyack turnpike; but when I came to search for that spot I failed to discover it; and—here we are!"

George Chesney laughed heartily. There was always a constraint upon these two men when in each other's society, but they struggled against the feeling as being unmanly, and both were manly men.

"Here we are—yes," he said; "and here I was *to* be, as I think I wrote you; but what *you* are doing here is another thing. Explain yourself. It's rather absurd for Roy Hilton, our crack shot, to be lost among the Ramapo Hills within two miles of Nanuet."

"But you must remember," Roy Hilton took him up hastily—neither could bear interference from the other—"that the Ramapo Hills might better be the Wind River Mountains for me. There, I would be on familiar ground; here, I am lost."

"However—and I say it with regret, remembering what brought me here—all this country is familiar to *me*, Hilton, and if you choose to come, I'll show you the way to the Nanuet station. You can take the New Jersey & New York Railway from there to the city, you know. If you don't show up, the fellows will think that you have gone on home. They'd never believe that Roy Hilton was lost when rabbit shooting."

Both men laughed pleasantly, and the sound ran lightly along the silence with a ring of good comradeship and life, in the quiet woods.

Far down in the distance the chattering squirrel broke the white silence, and another whirl of wind sent the crisp snow eddying around their feet.

"The only objection to your suggestion is," Hilton said, after a moment's thoughtfulness, "that I agreed to meet the fellows at the edge of the wood, and I would not like to go on home without them, Chesney. They might linger here searching for me. Besides, I promised, you know." He smiled—and Roy Hilton's smile was good to see. "Why should I break my word?"

Chesney shrugged his shoulders lightly.

"It wouldn't be Roy Hilton *to* break his word," he said. "I cannot blame you, my dear fellow. Only—do not again go from the path. A night in these woods wouldn't be the most agreeable. I understand them thoroughly. I warn you!"

Roy nodded. A slumbering fire woke in his eyes, a peculiar flush crept to his cheeks; he pulled at one end of his mustache, awkwardly.

"By the way," he said, nervously and with hesitation, as though he would not needlessly wound his companion, "I think you did not ask about my wife, Chesney. She is well—she is always well, you know. I hope"—and now the hesitation made words almost harsh—"I hope that you will come down to us—soon, my dear fellow. We must not—you and I—be other than friends. Here"—he held out his right hand, that nervous left hand still upon the rifle—"Here is my hand, Chesney. Take it, and let it bind our friendship."

The frank good-nature died from Chesney's face. The gray eyes flamed with angry fire. The head was lifted with a swift haughtiness that could match even Roy Hilton's old blood. A pallor struck the sternly repressed, proud face, and set the lips stiffly. Involuntarily his hands fell, clenched, to his side. A man in the height of his pride—the shield to a sore heart.

"Hilton," he said, steadily, though there was an unnatural hoarseness in his usually clear voice, and the stern lips could scarcely articulate as he would have them, "I bear no ill-will toward you more than I would toward any man who held the place toward myself that you hold. The race was free. You won her. I lost. I have yielded to fatality. But this I must say—you shall hear me now that the opportunity has come to speak—that *I* had an equal chance with you. She was kind to me until you came. We were lovers always up to that time. I would not recall old scenes and memories. I would not wound you or my own honor enough to speak of the things that have gone. She was a woman who would be just and generous. I can be no less than the same. She is, too, a woman and must choose for herself whom she would bless with her love. Only—and until you spoke I never thought that I would say this—only, remember: she was promised to me until you came and won her away! That I concede. But there is this much that you must yield to me: that she loved me once. She would have been *my* wife to-day had *you* remained away! And now this subject must die forever between us! The memory belongs to me. Until I have conquered memory I demand that silence shall rest upon it. No man, especially yourself, has the right to touch upon it! And until I can say that the subject is not a sad one to me I cannot permit myself to accept such an invitation from you—and *her!*"

He was remarkably handsome as the fading glow of sunset struck through the trees and, flushing the snow around them, touched even the human faces marked with bitterness and pride and passion.

A frown was growing blacker and blacker over Roy Hilton's face. His blood was proud and hot, and swift to take offense, strive as he would to restrain his passion for the sake of his manhood. He drew his tall figure proudly erect and his lips took on a haughty curve, his eyes black with the intensity of his emotion.

"That, as you well say, Chesney, is for you to decide," he said, between his lips. "I am bound to respect your pride, but I must also—and I, too, have the right to demand—that you shall not again speak of my wife—*my wife*, remember—in the terms of your old relations with her. That she chose me instead of yourself was her prerogative. The right has forever gone from you to speak of her—even to think of her—other than as another man's wife. She would scorn you if she knew—"

Chesney started forward, as though he would strike the man before him in his swift fury born of the last words. His eyes gleamed at this that was to his wounded heart an insult. He was white to the lips, but he clenched his hands and conquered his anger. Then he spoke, and his voice was such as no one had ever before heard from George Chesney.

"Hilton!" he exclaimed, under his breath, as though he must keep down even his words, lest they conquer him and throw down all barriers of manhood. "You are going too far, Hilton. Because Helen Stuart chose you—"

Roy lifted his right hand with a passionate gesture, his face matching in pallor that of his companion. His eyes burned blackly.

"I refuse to even hear her name from your lips at such a time as this," he said, with a steadiness born of intense self-repression. "I have done my best to hold you my friend in spite of this that has come between us; but now—"

"'But now!'" retorted Chesney. "Now I demand that you let this subject die utterly out, Hilton. When I have lost memory, we may speak of it. Not now."

There was a rustling of the bushes near at hand, and a woman's face peered through, but neither man saw or heard. The broad cart track ran along beyond the hedge of bush and brier to the right, and those passing through the wood from the main road to Nanuet used this rough road.

"And I tell you," exclaimed Roy Hilton, starting forward, his eyes upon the other's, his hand raised, clenched above him—"I tell you here and now, Chesney, that I will not bear one more word from you upon this subject! It is an insult to her as well as to myself, and any man who dares breathe insult to her may hold his life cheaply when in my hands. Her honor is more to me than all the world. I would avenge any lightest word against her without the least hesitation. Remember that."

"So!" whispered the woman behind the thicket, a gleam in her eyes. She shrugged her shoulders suggestively and turned away. "Jealous, eh? And that's Lawyer Chesney, too! Smart man; but I wonder that he doesn't make a charge against the other, and so gain a pretty high damage. But these folks in high life are so mighty afraid of their honor!"

She laughed contemptuously and disappeared in the thickness of the woods.

George Chesney did not reply to Roy's last words. He dared not speak lest his passion gain the mastery, and he would not yield to passion. He was a splendid fellow, in spite of his natural carelessness. He stood facing his rival quite motionless for a few minutes. The pallor faded and flushed and returned to his face. His teeth were shut down fiercely over his lips. He kept his hands at his sides resolutely.

Then, as though still he could not speak, he breathed deeply, biting his lip, and turned away down the path that soon hid him in the distance. A crisp silence remained. Even the squirrel was still. The wind had died away as the sunset glowed and flushed.

"Dastard!" murmured Roy Hilton, presently, between his stiff lips, his eyes mechanically falling upon the rifle which he still grasped so fiercely, his face betraying the struggle passing within between his mad passion of rage and jealousy and his strength of nobility—jealousy wakened at the thought that any man should dare think of his wife as this other man had dared. "He to tell me to my face that he has not yet placed that memory behind him, as any *man* should do!"

CHAPTER II.

A STRUGGLE WITH SELF.

Roy had forgotten where he was. Still standing where George Chesney left him, his eyes now turned along the darkening path, now bent moodily upon his boots, his thoughts were of the past and of the future. Of the past when, just graduated and left to the care of guardians, he took up his life with a zest and impulse natural to him. He had no special vocation in life but to be a true gentleman, and live up to the pride, the nobility of character and kindness of heart that descended to him through a long line of stern old Knickerbockers, one black vein among the high-born blood.

And this black vein was a jealousy in love that was almost insanity—among some of his ancestors had even developed into that malady. Knowing this well—for the old Knickerbocker Hiltons were proud of their genealogy, and kept their history alive—Roy did all in human power to strengthen his character against this black enemy of peace; but it lived too long and ran too strong through the generations to yield to one man's will.

Standing in the silence of the woods, Roy Hilton realized this, and involuntarily groaned, with a swift gesture of despair at the futility of his effort. He had travelled, not aimlessly, but that he should gain better knowledge than books could give, and with a widening appreciation of humanity, not as a people, but as individuals.

He was eight-and-twenty and a high-souled, cultured gentleman when he returned home and met Helen Stuart. She was a cultured woman, graceful and gracious, with a soul, perhaps, not so broad as his own, because lacking contact with the world, but a noble woman's soul, nevertheless.

He loved her. He met many women as beautiful, cultured and gracious, but Helen Stuart was the first woman whom he loved—and with him to love once was to love always.

Helen Stuart had many suitors. George Chesney was most favored among them. He and Helen were children together; he was her boy-lover even then. The Stuarts had a country-seat at Nyack. The Chesneys made this beautiful riverside town their home, spending little time in the city, even during the seasons. George only was in New York a great deal as Helen's recognized escort. Naturally, they drifted into an understanding, if not an actual engagement. She admired him, and having no awakening as to the height of a life brightened by love, she mistook sentiment for passion. He loved her and his love was as intense as Roy Hilton's. But Roy Hilton came—and won.

Theirs was not love at first sight. With either of them that was impossible. There was an intensity and a depth in Helen's character and Roy's that could not be awakened at a touch. They became friends; afterward, lovers.

But when Roy Hilton let love into his heart, he also opened the road to that demon of jealousy that spoiled many a life among the generations gone before him. He knew it had always been so, but trusted that with him, struggling against it as he had, it might be different; but the stain on a glass cannot be washed out by one pure drop. He was as insane as any among those stern forefathers, for the time, with the thought that another man held love in his heart for his wife—*his* wife. Helen Hilton was to be thought of by no one but as his own. That this man struggled to conquer his love could not drown the truth. He loved her, and loved her still. This demon, lying latent in his blood, grew stronger and blacker the more he thought of it. It rested so equally between them, which should win, that George Chesney might have been in his place to-day but for "fatality." That other man, with his handsome face and *débonnaire* manners once claimed Helen's love, had given her his own—nay, gave it to her still! That other man—

He bit his lip savagely, and a flush swept the pallor from his face. His finger-nails cut recklessly into the palm of his hand as it fell clenched at his side.

He raised the rifle suddenly and swung it to his shoulder; wheeling upon his heel—his face set like marble—not in the direction pointed out for him to take, but in George Chesney's very footsteps. His eyes were stormy and yet wonderfully sad with this bitter, biting struggle between a noble soul and a demon born in the blood centuries past.

The snow crushed under foot, stirring the dead leaves beneath, leaving his course well marked in the footsteps of the other.

CHAPTER III.

THROUGH THE WHITE SILENCE.

As for Chesney, his thoughts would have matched Roy Hilton's in their tumult and fever; but he fought against love that was so long in his life that it could not be torn out at a moment's bidding without also ending life. He fought against love, knowing that his manhood and honor demanded this; but though a mighty enemy to his peace, it was in no other phase comparable with the demon centuries old that rose full-statured that day in his successful rival's heart.

The struggle was bitter; the pride in his blood cried out against the truth that was forced upon him as an insult from the man who should have been his friend because of his nobility and victory; but, in spite of his anger and humiliation and pride, he knew—and knowing softened his heart—that his friend was both generous and just. There was that height of manhood in each that forced recognition from the other. Meeting under other circumstances, their friendship would have been lasting and deep.

The first flush of his anger was dying out. He recalled, for he was just, the qualities that made his friend so dangerous to his happiness. He slackened his pace as his excitement cooled. Once he paused and glanced around upon the solitude. A dry twig somewhere near crackled and broke, making a sharp sound in the silence. He turned quickly, his face lighting, almost hoping it were his friend coming in his generosity to take back his words, so granting him the opportunity to make amends for his own haughtiness. But nothing followed; nothing lay behind him but his well-defined tracks in the light snow.

Nothing?

"It's a long walk after all from Hardman's old house in these woods to Nanuet," he said, by and by, as he walked on more slowly, the semi-darkness of a snowy night thickening around him. He was no coward. He liked such solitude as that when in his disturbed mood, but he was restless. Then he laughed, and his face cleared of its sadness as he said, lightly:

"Thinking of my life's ghosts makes me superstitious. I shall be glad to resume the society of my fellow-men. Old Hardman's impression upon me, too. If ever there was an old sinner, he is one! He knows I am beginning to see through his sharpness, and he has no love for me."

Was that any one in the bushes back there that the dry twigs crackled so? The cart-track was just to the right, and that was the usual cross-cut from Nanuet to the Nyack turnpike. Perhaps some one was passing that way and would bear him company. He would be rather glad of companionship. It might be the hunting-party not far off, though he caught no sound of voices. Friend or stranger, he would take up with him rather than walk the rest of the way alone. He stopped and turned his pleasant face toward the dry thicket that hid the view of the cart track beyond.

"Hello!" he said, cheerily. "Anybody there? If so, comrade, let's go on together. It's a trifle ghostly in this place alone."

A pleasant laugh that of his. A pleasant face turned toward the thicket in the gathering gloom. A light step, full of life and strength of purpose and pride of manhood, that upon the lightly lying snow, as he started across to the thicket. Life and light and youth and determination to be noble embodied in him.

* * * * *

A half-hour later, Roy Hilton, in his hunting-suit of blue, a good deal the worse for briers and thickets, his rifle in its case, his face very white and determinedly set, boarded the train for New York at the Nanuet station, some dozen or so idly curious eyes gazing after the handsome stranger with the haughty air. At that very moment, out in the white silence of the woods, what was it lying motionless and lifeless upon the snow, under the whispering trees behind the thicket? Did the footprints lead to that?

CHAPTER IV.

THE GATHERING CLOUD.

"By the Lord Harry, you fellows, I believe we're in luck at last!" exclaimed a good-natured voice, as a young man struck into the cart track from the deeper woods to the right, a gun resting carelessly over his shoulder, the game-bag at his side pretty fairly filled, as one or two gray cottony tails in view mutely proclaimed. "Here's an open track, as good to see after the briers and brambles as the Appian Way."

"It's your luck, Whitney; you're always in luck," said another young man, dashing out into the open path with a plunge through the thicket. "If it isn't anything more than a hunting-suit, you are always in it."

"Hear! Hear!" cried half a dozen laughing voices; and with considerable confusion and gay words and laughter, some half-a-score of young men crowded out into the path. All good-looking, good-natured, wealthy fellows, in high spirits after the day's fair sport, the fading light through the woods glinting now and then along their rifle-barrels or touching some one face among them into relief against the dark background of trees and thicket and falling of night.

"It's a mighty odd thing, though," said the first speaker, after a moment, as they crowded on together in a group of nine, his handsome face, turned back toward his companions, grave with anxiety. "It's a mighty odd thing where Hilton is! We've hallooed until we have no voices left, and he hasn't so much as breathed a note in answer, to our knowledge."

"In all probability he has had our good fortune to find this track and gone on to the railway station," suggested one of the party, more assurance in his voice than in his face, although the deepening gloom hid this from the eyes of his companions.

"That is like you, Chadwick," said the young man nearest him, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Always choosing the easiest way out of trouble! I never did see such a fellow!"

"Better luck next time, then!" said Chadwick, laughing. He glanced suspiciously though stealthily from left to right, where the snowfall made ghostly phantoms of tree and bush and brier. A good-natured, easy-going fellow generally, but now indefinably impressed by the darkness of the woods.

"By the shade of brave Robin Hood, but we sound like a band of robbers," said another of the party, lightly. "We haven't bagged anything but rabbit and quail; but it's been a good day, after all."

"Unless we've bagged a mysterious disappearance!" added his companion on the right. "It *is* rather strange that Hilton couldn't find the trysting-place, Graham. Hilton's no fool, and he would never get *lost* in these woods."

"He has been here only once before, you know, Manning," said a young man, calling from the rear of the party. "It is possible, if not probable, that Hilton has strayed somewhere hereabout."

"Lost, strayed or stolen!" Graham retorted. "Let's set it up on a board. The natives will think it a sheep!"

"Or a dog," suggested Chadwick, at random, this strange depression upon him. "Or a cow. That is the way they advertise lost property, isn't it?"

"Nevertheless," said Whitney, quietly, and the joking fell off at the gravity in his voice as he met Jack Graham's amused glance, "it isn't like Hilton to break an agreement. If he has gone on, it is only under peculiar circumstances. He may have gone to the place, you know, and waited a reasonable time before going on. It isn't Hilton's way to fall back on his word."

"That's so," acquiesced Manning, as gravely as Whitney had spoken. "You're right there, Frank. Hilton wouldn't do it for a lark; he never trifled with his honor even at college, and he wouldn't begin now."

"No," said Frank Whitney, steadily, swinging his rifle from one shoulder to the other, the darkness now so low upon them that no face was clearly to be seen. "No. It isn't Hilton's way, Manning."

Silence through the dim woods. The crunching of their feet over the snow, the occasional sharp click of a twig against their rifles or a swish as a bough fell back as they passed on broke the wide hush. Somewhere, far in the distance, a hound bayed. The shriek of an engine pierced the solitude as a train thundered along at the far edge of the wood.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, with crush and crunch of the softly lying snow upon the leaves and rough ruts of the track. Conversation died, and uncomfortable anxiety replaced it. They knew quite too well that something out of the ordinary kept Roy Hilton from meeting them at the break of the woods at the edge of the Nyack turnpike. Tramp, tramp, tramp, and a rustle and crackle of underwood and brier. How very still and mysterious the woods were, stretching away upon both sides, and only opening definitely ahead where lay the little town.

"It has been a good day, but I wish Hilton were with us instead of mysteriously disappearing," said Chadwick, discontentedly, as they struck into the road at the edge of the woods, the railway station in sight though still some distance away.

"And it has given us the blues to a man, tramping through that murderous wood in the darkness," said Graham, restlessly, though with apparent unconcern.

"What is the row, I wonder?" added Nelson, to one of the others, as they neared the station, where an excited group was collected. "The price of corn gone up, I should think, judging from their eagerness, or the failure of somebody's potato crop."

"Don't be ridiculous, Nelson," advised Manning, slapping the game-bag slung over his shoulder in a self-satisfied way, as they stepped up on the lower end of the platform.

"There isn't so much as a shred of hope on potatoes this year, you know. That's hopelessly gone by."

"Anyhow, it's something that makes them a little extra to-night," said Chadwick, confidently. "They're pretty easy-going in ordinary."

"A mighty sight *too* much something," retorted a bystander, overhearing this remark. "It'd be as well for some folks if it wa'n't always necessary for something to *be* the matter on such occasions, stranger."

"What is it, friend?" queried Graham, good-humoredly. "Nothing serious, I hope?"

"That's accordin' how it's took," was the sullen answer, as the man eyed the group suspiciously. "If 'twas *me* in his place I'd feel powerful 'fraid folks'd take it hard."

He considered this a joke, and laughed roughly, turning away, when another man interposed:

"Mebby they're his friends, Jim," he said, persuasively. "There ain't no use in bein' hard on 'em if they didn't do it."

"Do what?" queried Nelson, amusedly, thinking the man merely boorish and sullen.

Jim shrugged his shoulders significantly.

"A deed I wouldn't care to be accused of," he said, sententiously. "Murder ain't a special pleasant thing noways you ken fix it, an' there ain't no doubt that this is murder."

Excitement took the place of careless good-humor in that group of young men. Murder at any time rouses curiosity and indignation and horror. Under their fear for their absent friend the news came upon them startlingly.

"Why the devil don't you explain?" demanded Graham, in sudden fierceness. "If it isn't a joke, be sensible, man!"

The man grumbled, but complied:

"The body was found in the snow just beyond the thicket, at the side of the cart track," the man explained, concisely. "One of old Hardman's farm-hands found it, on his way from the town to the old house in the woods, just at dusk. Been dead no longer than an hour, the medical man said. Murder, undoubtedly. There was a rifle-ball straight through his heart. A near aim, too. Some one firing from the thicket—no further, for the clothing was burned around the wound."

They were intensely excited, those young men just in from their day's pleasuring. Their faces were blanched with dread of what might be made known in the next words. Their absent friend was uppermost in their minds.

The man who was giving this news as they hastened along the platform and across to the store where the body had been carried, knowing nothing of their anxiety, continued his description.

"It's bad enough for him," he said, significantly, with a nod in the direction they were going, "but it's worse for the other feller. We see him go off on the train not more'n a half-hour after that. Mebby you know him," glancing sharply at the group around him. "Tall, he was, an' a good bit handsome, dressed like you fellers. Blue eyes, fair hair an' mustache. He was white an' powerful uppish in manner, an' proud as though he was a-treadin' of us down. Seemed in a mighty hurry to be off. Had a rifle along of him an' a game-bag. Pretty black for him, there ain't no doubt. They'd had a quarrel, some says. Old Hardman's niece heard 'em as she was comin' through the woods. The dead man's her uncle's lawyer, you know, Chesney is—"

"*Who* is?" thundered Frank Whitney, stopping short and turning upon the speaker in such a fury of horror and dismay that the man fell back involuntarily, raising his hand as though he feared a blow. "What! What do you mean, man? Speak up! Chesney dead, you say—murdered? And who is suspected—"

His voice died out in very horror. His face was pallid and drawn. The same fear seemed to have fallen upon his comrades.

"Horrible!" he muttered, turning away toward the station, as though he dared not face what lay lifeless and still in the store just over the way, his companions following him, save Manning and Graham. "What shall we do, friends? Chesney is murdered—"

They knew his fear. All of Roy Hilton's friends knew the circumstances of his love affair. They knew, too, his passionate temperament, and dared not utter words, lest they speak unadvisedly, and silence be best.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 5.]

ST. VALENTINE AND CUPID.

BY H. M. PINCKNEY.

Saint Valentine, long years ago,
  Upon his natal day,
Across the meadows white with snow
  Delighted took his way.
The snow, unbroken since its fall
  By bird or beast or man,
Lay o'er the hills and valleys all,
And decked the rugged spruces tall,
  As only Nature can.

The sun, careering up on high,
  Threw down his glittering beams
From out a clear, unclouded sky
  In such abundant streams
Of light that never mortal eye
  Beheld a fairer sight;
For scattered wide both far and near
He made unnumbered hosts appear
  Of diamonds sparkling bright.

Saint Valentine in joyful mood
  Had crossed the meadows wide;
He took the pathway thro' the wood;
  When, by an oak-tree's side,
That close beside the foot-path stood,
  A naked babe he spied.
His shoulders bore a pair of wings,
A short bow, with a score of strings,
  Lay by him in the snow;
Asleep he lay, and sleeping smiled,
While 'round and o'er the lovely child
  Hung beauty's charming glow.

The good saint stood transfixed—amazed,
As on the slumb'ring babe he gazed.
  "What's here? Can I believe my eyes?
Belongs this babe in Paradise,
  Or in this world below?
He surely must be frozen quite.
  Hullo here! What's your name?
Whoe'er has left you in this plight
  Is surely much to blame.
How came you here?" The urchin yawned
  And rubbed his starry eyes;
Then raised himself and looked around
  In sleepy, mild surprise.

"My name's Dan Cupid, sir," said he,
  And smiled a winning smile;
"I'd just lain down beneath this tree
  To rest a little while."

"But would you not soon freeze to death?"
  Exclaimed Saint Valentine.
"O, no! Cold winter's icy breath
  Affects not me nor mine.
True love no frosts can ever chill,
  No storms can drive away;
Naught but indifference can kill,
  Or check him in his sway.
And these, my brightly polished darts,
  Bear e'er the magic power
To swell each joy of human hearts
  And comfort sorrow's hour."

"But, then, do they not wound as well?"
  Inquired Saint Valentine.
Said Cupid: "Yes; but let me tell
  About these darts of mine.
They wound, 'tis true; but notice take
  That in themselves they bear
A healing for all wounds they make—
  'Tis so, I do declare.

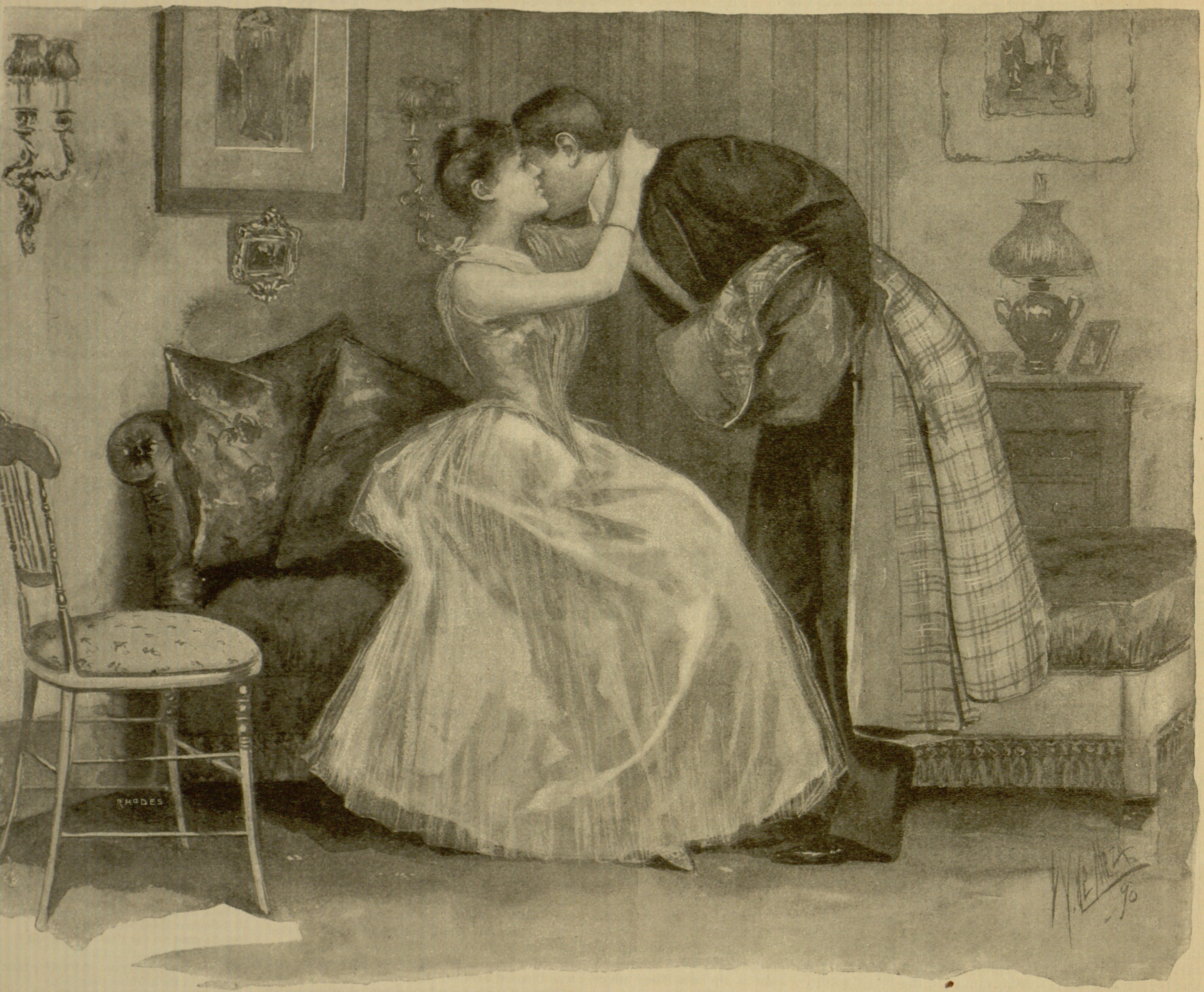
"Now shall I have the pleasant task
  With love to fill your soul?
I'll grant whate'er you choose to ask
  If 'tis in my control."
Said Cupid, as his bow he drew
  And fixed in place a dart;
Like lightning-flash the arrow flew
  And pierced the good saint's heart.

A look of rapture, strange and new,
  O'erspread his kindly face.
Said he: "This boon I ask of you—
  That I may take your place
On this day in each coming year,
  And bear your magic bow,
That I may cause this rapture dear
  Through other hearts to flow."

Said Dan: "My word I pledged to you,
And Love's own word is ever true."
And so each year, on this same day,
Saint Valentine holds royal sway
  O'er all hearts here below,
And whiles his happiest hours away
  By using Cupid's bow.

YOUTH.

How delighted dost thou revel in the full flow of nature's bounteous stream, swelling to expected perfection! To the present feeling of enjoyment, and to the unbounded anticipation of future bliss, how open is youth! How full of delight and how beauteous in infancy, although, like the early blossom of spring, it feels the chills that its nature is heir to. We press the elastic muscle, full and soft, of the healthful child, and pass our fingers through the glossy curls and fondly pinch the rosy, dimpled cheek, and gaze in the laughing eyes, and express with enthusiasm our admiration of the promise nature gives of its future perfection—we know not what; but we feel and know that we love youth even in its imbecility. As it approaches to and attains maturity, how admirable, how lovely is youth in its pristine purity! Though man may not measure the power of God by his own weakness, he may, and must, love youth, beauty and purity; and while such love is active in him, he must adore his infinitely good Creator.



THE CARLETONS;

OR,

THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY.

BY ROBERT GRANT,

Author of "Jack Hall," "The Confessions of a Frivolous Girl," "Mrs. Harold Stagg," etc.

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE SMALL HOURS.

"I THINK you may free your mind from all solicitude concerning Miss Violet," said Percy, with a laugh, looking out upon the dancers. "She seems eminently well fitted to take care of herself, I should say. She is so signal a success that it seems a pity she is not to come out for another year. I had really no idea she was so handsome."

"She looks lovely to-night; but she is only seventeen, Mr. White."

"The men who are talking to her look as though they would pardon that," he answered, blithely.

It was time now for the german to begin. When the couples had ranged themselves around the room, Constance was pleased to see that Bill, of whom also, in her absorption, she had become oblivious, had a partner. But she judged, from the expression of his face, that he was still down-hearted, and when she happened to catch sight of his glove, she apprehended the cause. Poor Bill! His cup was full. The rent had spread itself until it was a chasm, and he seemed completely engrossed by the problem how best to conceal his hand from view. Moreover, his doubts concerning his studs and the variegated bouquet had gradually become certainties in his mind, for no other youth in the room wore studs of a similar pattern in his shirt bosom, and no other bouquet was composed of garden flowers only. He felt that the eyes of the entire company must be fixed derisively upon him.

The german, which began gayly, waxed gayer still. Percy remained unremitting in his devotion, and Constance was taken out two or three times by men who, attracted by her interesting face, had asked to be introduced to her. But she was scarcely a belle in the accepted sense of that word. It was Violet, rather, who was entitled to be called so, upon whom the laurels of the evening, in the form of favors and bouquets, were showered until her plain white dress was fairly gay with ribbons and other decorations, and her lap laden with flowers. Her beauty and fascination prompted man after man to be presented to her, and to return again and again to admire not only her charms of person but her piquancy and sprightliness as well. Ever in her vicinity hovered Randolph Davis, indolent and handsome, and ready to whisper in her ear languid utterances of a kind that flattered, because at the same time he made her believe that all the rest of womankind was beneath his notice. Radiant and triumphant, she stood, as the last figure of the german came to an end at ten minutes of two, the center of an adoring half-dozen, and watched by many other eyes spell-bound by her beauty, none the less striking because one of the bands of her hair had become loosened and had dropped a little. Transported by excitement, so that time was naught to her, she was unaware at first of the hand laid on her shoulder. It required also her sister's voice, suggesting that it was time to go, before she heeded.

"Oh, Constance, we needn't go just yet. It isn't late."

"It is two o'clock."

"Two! How can it be?"

The genuineness of her surprise took by storm the already captivated group.

"You mustn't think of going," said one; "Now is the very cream of the evening," said another; while Randolph Davis cried with an imploring glance: "Just one more waltz, Miss Constance. Let her have one more."

At this moment the musicians began to play again one of the most entrancing of airs.

"I must have one more. Just one, and I will come," said Violet, and with a happy nod at Constance she laid her hand on Randolph's shoulder and went spinning down the room.

Constance herself was prevailed on by Percy White to imitate her example. She felt too happy not to accept so plausible an excuse for dallying. But the end of the waltz came at last, and with it she felt obliged to take possession of Violet and snatch her from the custody of her worshipers, a trio of whom followed her to the foot of the flight leading up to the dressing-room, bearing her flowers and favors.

"Good-bye, for a year," she cried, waving her fan over the banisters, with a mock despair that was yet real.

"What cruelty!"

"It must not be!"

"We will reason with your mother!"

So answered as many voices following her up the stairs.

"Oh, Bill, I'm so sorry," gasped Constance, perceiving suddenly, as she reached the top, her brother, whom she had told half an hour before to go up and that she would be ready in a minute. "I really didn't mean to keep you waiting."

"It's ten minutes past two. What will mother say?" replied their natural protector, who was standing on the threshold of the dressing-room, consulting his precious silver time-piece with a severe brow. "You seem to forget that while you can lie in bed I have to get up to business in the morning, as usual."

"All my fault, Bill. Oh, I've had a lovely time—gorgeous. See all these!" exclaimed Violet, showing her trophies.

"S-h," murmured Constance, realizing that such an ebullition of spirits might be diverting if overheard in the men's dressing-room.

"I have; I don't care who knows it!"

At the foot of the stairs Percy and Randolph were both waiting with their overcoats on. During the short passage from house to house Bill saw fit, eminently to the disgust of his elder sister's admirer, to stick by her side; but while he was fumbling with the door-key Percy managed to whisper:

"Will you not spare me a single flower?"

He had asked that question of her twice before that evening; once she had pretended not to hear, once she had laughed and shaken her head, now she hesitated for a moment, and her fingers trembled as they played with the leaves of her bouquet.

“Please—just one.”

The trembling fingers detached a bud; the timid eyes made sure that no one was looking. Violet was occupied in the rear, and Bill still fumbling with the key.

“Thank you, so much! I shall keep it forever. Good night.”

She caught these words, and by the flare of light from the now opened door-way, Constance thought she saw Percy kiss the flower. But she preferred to think that he was simply raising his hat. Not many paces away, another dialogue was taking place. While Constance had almost scurried home, it had pleased Violet to saunter at a gait which suited her escort habitually. She insisted on carrying all her belongings herself, and he was not the sort of youth to insist on being useful. After she had taken a step or two beyond the awning, a big rose which had been given her in the german, and which she had stuck loosely into her dress, chanced to fall to the ground. Randolph picked it up and placed it calmly in his button-hole.

“I am going to keep this,” he said.

“You may, if you like. It will be faded to-morrow.”

“I ought to say, I suppose, that I would press it and keep it,” he murmured, lazily.

“I don't believe you 're such a goose,” Violet answered, with a laugh, and a toss of her head.

“In that case,” he replied, with the same languid utterance, “I change my mind; I will press and keep it.”

“Then give it to me.” She stopped, and faced him beamingly.

“And what if I refuse?”

“Give it to me, Mr. Davis!” The tone was of command, not supplication.

“May I have it, if I ask for it humbly?”

“Can you be humble? Let me see you try.”

Randolph, whose ulster, thrown across his shoulders, had rather the effect of a cavalier's cloak, dropped gracefully on one knee on the sidewalk, and held out the rose.

“I crave it on my bended knee,” he said, with unembarrassed gallantry.

Violet tittered with amusement.

“How absurd you are! Oh, keep it, if you like,” she cried, and therewithal she slipped past him, and ran laughing up the steps behind her sister.

So, the Davis ball was at an end, and all that remained was to talk it over.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW THE WINTER FARED WITH THE CARLETON PROGENY.

The chief consequence of talking it over was that Violet was allowed to come out, after all. The young girl's importunities, fortified by her enthusiasm and triumphant experience, weakened somewhat Mrs. Carleton's resolution; and when these were reinforced by representations from a dozen different quarters that it would be a shame to keep back a girl so thoroughly suited to grace society and who had already achieved a brilliant success, her mother exclaimed with a sigh at last:

“Oh, well, have your own way, my dear. Perhaps it is as well that you should be going to parties as dreaming about them.”

So there were two Carleton girls in society instead of one, and dressmakers were more rampant than ever in the Carleton establishment, which was inopportune, for Harold was at home again, none the more sober because of his late experience.

That experience had ended far otherwise than seemed probable. The fever, a not severe case in itself, had come in the nick of time for Master Harold, since it became the means of making Cousin Rebecca his devoted slave. As his mother had implied, when Harold chose, he could be angelic; and when angelic it was next to impossible to resist him. One of these phases, during which butter would not melt in his mouth, came over him after the fever had left him, and he lay weak but convalescent in the abode of the enemy.

Actuated by a stern sense of duty, Cousin Rebecca had tended him during a fortnight of discomfort, endured his caprices and slaved for him without a murmur, and, as a consequence, was already disposed to regard him with more favorable eyes in spite of herself.

Hitherto her fostering care had been bestowed solely on parrots and poodles; hence it was surprising to her that a sneaking affection for this ruthless boy of thirteen should begin to take hold of her withered heart-strings. Yet it came to pass that when, beginning to recover but unable to do more than sit up, the angelic fit took possession of him and he was for days at a time affectionate in tone and saintly in behavior and appearance, the enemy suddenly found herself in his thrall. From this time forth she could not do enough for him, and nothing was too good for him; and in keeping with the saying, “like mistress, like maid,” the entire household, Jane, the cook and the choreman, his admirers in secret, perhaps, before, fell at his feet openly.

Accordingly, Harold returned home with the light of triumph on his brow. Besides a letter which celebrated his praises and cast palpable slurs upon his brothers and sisters, Harold bore as a pledge of his mistress's esteem a young canary in a cage, that was guaranteed to become a warbler, a new pair of skates and a ten-dollar bill to put in the bank.

“Here is the heir. Come, let us kill him and divide his inheritance among us,” said Ben, who was passing Sunday at home.

When the cat was let out of the bag, and the family learned from Harold's own lips the episode of the orange, there was a hilarious outburst, which culminated finally in an agreement that Harold on the whole had earned his good fortune by his ingenuity in coining epithets.

“I thought myself pretty fair in that line,” remarked Ben, “but you have a positive genius for it, *fratello mio*.”

Ben was studying Italian; hence this little ebullition in a foreign tongue. He had conceived the idea that it would be a good plan to know that language in order to read about pictures. It was not one of the studies of the Freshman year, but somehow Ben had seen fit to become a free lance in the way of acquiring knowledge. College life had suddenly snuffed out all his interest in Greek and Latin and mathematics, and at the same time he thought he had discovered that he was so well prepared in these branches that he would have to do very little work in order to keep up to the mark in them. He was becoming interested in fifty dozen things that were not required. Already he was an aspirant for the baseball nine; bent upon distinguishing himself later in private theatricals; curious as to the mysteries of secret societies, concerning which dark hints were dropped by his classmates from time to time; absorbed by the interest of coloring a meerschaum pipe; and addicted to sitting up late at night reading whatever he could lay his hands on in the way of literature—fiction, poetry, biography or the drama. He and Harrison Fay exchanged frequent letters and philosophized about life in general. Harrison was deep in science of every kind, and disposed to combat with what he called stern and incontrovertible facts the poetic periods that flowed from Ben's pen. On the other hand, Ben accused Harrison of wishing to demonstrate life to be a mechanism and men and women mere machines. Accordingly they hammered away at each other at the rate of ten or a dozen pages of note-paper weekly, and collected material for their diatribes in the intervals.

Although Ben was but a Freshman and Percy White a magnificent Sophomore, they saw a good deal of each other and were friends. Ben delighted in Percy's easy-going, frank ways, and Percy, in turn, found Ben clever and stimulating. He, too, was a good deal of a night owl, and, under the guise of exercising a protector's eye over the Freshman, would drop into Ben's room many an evening for half an hour's chat before going to bed. Percy said that it did him good to change his atmosphere occasionally, which had become far from studious or literary or philosophical, but was on the contrary lively and volatile, and promised to become reckless. For Percy was travelling with the liveliest set in the class, and was, moreover, one of the liveliest and at the same time most popular men of the set. When he was not hazing Freshmen or playing pranks on the faculty or cutting recitations or “ragging” tradesmen's signs, he was scanning the list of studies to make out which was the very easiest elective in order to take it, or else was one of a leisurely half-dozen deep in easy-chairs smoking and spinning yarns, when he ought to have been at his books. He was in famous spirits at this period, and life looked very bright, for while he was aware, and sometimes remorsefully aware, that he was wasting his time, he consoled himself by the vague answer that he was going to have all the fun he could for four years, and that then he would settle down as a hard worker. For, after all, there was no need of haste in his case, seeing that his father was a rich and driving man who was amply able to support him for a moderate spell of idleness, and push him rapidly ahead when he was ready to go into business. Not that for a moment Percy contemplated an idle existence. To hear him talk of his future at such moments as he let himself out in his midnight talks with Ben, one would have fancied there was no limit to his ambition. He was a profound believer in his own abilities to accomplish what he set his mind on; not conceitedly so in an unpleasant sense, but merely it never seemed to occur to him to doubt that the moment he chose to try—really to try—he would overcome obstacles and forge splendidly ahead. Had not his father done so? Why should not he, who had twenty-fold more advantages than his father had enjoyed in the way of education, accomplish proportionately more?

So, with these high hopes seething in his brain, he was content for the present to rollic and sing songs, and give free vent to his animal spirits, especially as he was in love with the most charming girl in the world, who would be sure to keep him from doing anything very bad, and whom he intended to marry as soon as he left college and settled down. He was proud of having chosen her, and proud of her as the sweetest and loveliest and noblest woman whom he had ever seen. He was sure of that, and he felt that for her sake there was nothing he would not endure. What were college rules where she was concerned? If Leander swam the Hellespont, surely he could afford to run the risk of being rusticated, in order to dance the german with her.

But fortune favored Percy in this particular instance. His absence from college was not discovered, and the rosebud which his sweetheart had given him consequently wore no thorns. He was in high feather for days after, and he let it be whispered about how cleverly he had hoodwinked the authorities, and, later on in the week, his exultation inspired him to build a mammoth bonfire under the very eye of the faculty chamber, from the peril of detection connected with which, he managed to escape scot-free.

Meanwhile, each of the Carleton girls was enjoying her first winter in society more than she had expected, by which is meant that Constance did not, on the whole, detest going out, and Violet found her anticipations thrown into the shade by reality. It was rather hard for Constance at the first few parties not to have her principal adorer present, and the contrast between the consciousness that some one was there who was desperately devoted to her and knowing that the men who talked and danced with her thought her simply a very nice girl was rather trying. Not that she was a wall-flower. She made a good many pleasant friends, who almost invariably spoke to her evening after evening; and though not a belle like Violet, she had no reason to feel heart-sore on account of neglect. The main difficulty was that after the novelty had worn off, she found that she did not care very much about going, and naturally the fact that she was bored detracted from her power to please; so that she occasionally returned home declaring that she was never going again. But somehow she kept on going; could it be that the hope that Percy would appear some evening lured her from festivity to festivity? A young woman's heart is difficult to fathom; but does it seem likely, considering she had made up her mind, after mature reflection, that he had done very wrong in coming to the Davis ball against the orders of the faculty, and that she had done very wrong in giving him that rose-bud? She had asked herself a hundred times since why she had given it to him, and had never been able to obtain a satisfactory explanation. Certainly she would be glad to see him again; but if he broke the college rules a second time for her sake, she intended to show him what she really thought of such a thing.

She did not have this opportunity, for the next time Percy appeared was by permission duly granted. The winter recess of two weeks had begun, and he was to spend it at home. Not only he, but Ben, who arrived with a tall hat and a cane, and was altogether so “transmogrified,” as Violet phrased it, as to be almost unrecognizable. He was still thin and spindly, but he had an air about him that suggested progress, and which prompted Mrs. Carleton to say next day to her eldest son:

“Now do, Bill, follow Ben's example and buy a beaver. That gray slouch hat you wear is really shabby.”

“Yes, do, Bill,” echoed Violet, for the gray slouch hat had come to be almost a family grievance. Even Constance added:

“I think a beaver would be very becoming to you, Bill.”

William blushed, but looked dogged. To buy a tall hat would be to abandon completely the principles which he had adopted at the beginning of his business career, and which it seemed to him that he had been forsaking one after another. A swallow-tail coat had been bad enough, but a tall hat would be a crowning stroke. Yet in his inner consciousness he yearned to wear one, and though he left the house defiantly that morning in the old gray slouch, he came down-stairs dressed for church, on Easter Sunday, in a glossy tile and a brand-new pair of yellow kids.

From this time forward, Bill's evolution in the way of toilet was rapid. Having forsaken his principles, there was soon no limit but the size of his bank account to the decoration of his person. He changed his tailor, and instead of jackets that were suitable to a lad of sixteen, appeared in flawless coats and trousers of which the central crease indicated careful folding. The coral studs had long ago been banished, and the silver turnip, before another year was over, was supplanted by a gold stem-winder, bought from his earnings. His special fads, however, began to be boots and neckties, of both of which his stock was soon more than ample.

His steadiness at the office was in no whit abated by these changes in his outward appearance, and Mr. Sanborn, though possibly alarmed at first, was able to detect no falling off in punctuality or methodical devotion on the part of the son of the house. Meantime, the figures in his savings-bank book were constantly increasing in importance, for he had now a salary of eight hundred dollars, from which, by a little parsimony, he was able to save a handsome slice. By the time his taste for boots and scarfs was fully developed, that amount had been swelled to a thousand dollars a year.

Also, in the course of this next twelvemonth, Bill's attitude toward society underwent a change. During the first winter subsequent to his fiasco at the Davis ball, he frequented parties under pressure, as the escort of his sisters, and played the part of a shy, stolid youth who found difficulty in making up his mind to talk to anybody; and when he did, had very little to say. But familiarity will sometimes breed audacity in place of contempt, and instead of despising parties, Bill, by the middle of the second winter, had grown to look upon them with positive favor, and to figure at them as rather a swell. He had become very particular as to the ironing of his shirt bosoms and the immaculate arrangement of his white tie, and when he appeared in full evening-dress, he was really a very stylish-looking fellow. His whiskers, which had grown out to the proper length, were groomed by him with tender solicitude, and he might have had a mustache had he not preferred to keep the expression of his firm upper lip unimpaired. He could now talk without embarrassment to such young women as he favored with his society, and, moreover, his society was adjudged desirable by the most fastidious petticoats. When Ethel expressed herself on the subject to Violet by saying: “I never saw such a change in anybody as in your brother William,” Violet felt that she needed no longer dread lest he would do something peculiar, which was a fear that had haunted her at parties all that first winter.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

Of that first winter, and, indeed, of a second, not much needs to be written in order to chronicle the doings of the Carleton family. At least, whatever is requisite to be known about them will appear sufficiently, in one form or another, if the next two years are passed over without further description, and we think of them and their friends again as that much older; that is to say, of Constance as twenty-one, of Violet as nearly twenty, of Bill as twenty-three enjoying one thousand dollars per annum, of Ben a junior in college, of Percy White a senior, of Ethel Davis no taller but more patrician than ever, of Harold on the verge of seventeen, of Cousin Rebecca Hubbard not yet defunct, of Harrison Fay almost a civil engineer, of Randolph Davis dropped from college and indolent and handsome as of yore, of Mr. and Mrs. Short still next-door neighbors, and of John Carleton and his wife busier than ever with hopes and fears for their progeny.

Said John to his wife one evening when, as not infrequently happened, the children were out and they were left at home to sit up for them:

“I suppose you know what you 're about, Mary, in allowing Violet and Randolph Davis to carry on as they do? I passed near them this afternoon strolling in one of the by-ways of the Park, but they were so occupied with each other they didn't see me.”

“Indeed, John, I am very much disturbed on that score, since you ask me,” she answered, laying down her fancy-work—a skate-bag she was embroidering for Harold, whom she was still fain to call her baby. “I didn't suppose you had noticed. It has troubled me very much for some time because, whatever the outcome, it is likely so far as I can see to be disastrous. If he really wishes to marry her—I cannot bear the idea of it—but if he does, I tremble to think of the future; and, if he is only flirting with her— Well, I only hope that Violet, poor child, is not so much infatuated as I fear she may be.”

“It has been going on now off and on

for nearly two years; time enough, I should think, for any one to make up his mind in. I may be absorbed in my business, but I am not stone-blind. The deacon, your father, would never have allowed a young man to dilly-dally round one of his daughters without asking him to give an account of himself, and I guess it's about time for me to put my oar in and find out how the case stands."

Mrs. Carleton shook her head.

"It wouldn't do at all, John. Young people nowadays have to settle those matters between themselves, so far, at least, as making up their minds whether they wish to marry each other or not. If you were to ask Randolph Davis what his intentions were, he would like as not look as innocent as possible and say that he didn't understand what you meant."

"In which case I should tell him pretty quickly that his room was better than his company, so far as my daughters are concerned."

"And what would be the result? He would inform Violet that he was forbidden to have anything to do with her, and she would consequently be fifty times more anxious to see him. They would correspond and meet secretly, and all chance of influencing her through an appeal to her good sense and right-mindedness would be gone. I agree with you, John, that this must not be allowed to go on; but how to remedy the evil, without driving Violet to commit some folly, is keeping my mind on the stretch day and night. I have hinted to her in pretty plain language once or twice what I thought of him, but whenever I introduce the subject, she changes it at once, so that I am kept in the dark as to what her real feelings are. I can only surmise, but I must say that I have every reason to fear that she is very much interested in him. What is much more doubtful is whether he is in earnest regarding her; and, assuming that he is, the problem arises as to what we are to say when she comes to us with the announcement that he has asked her to marry him. Are we to refuse our consent and take the consequences, or let her marry this man and lay up unhappiness for herself? What will the consequences be? We cannot prevent her marrying him if she sees fit, for he has all the money he wants from his father; and, while I do not apprehend that Violet would marry him immediately in the face of our united opposition, you know what a pertinacious girl she is when she has set her mind on anything. Then, too, she will have the support of the world—the social world that is; for to marry into the Davis family would be considered generally a brilliant match, and so it would be, from the point of view of position and wealth. There is where I feel guilty, John; I ought to have nipped this affair in the bud, and I blame myself for being so egregiously weak as to be flattered that he should be paying attention to her, when I knew at heart that he was not the sort of man I wished my daughters to be intimate with. I tried to distinguish between a desirable partner for the german and a desirable man for a husband, though I might have realized, had I not been vain, how quickly the one may lay pretensions to become the other."

"Which means," said her husband, "that you don't think much of him."

"How can I think much of a young man who has no occupation, who has been dropped from college for idleness, and whose sole ambition seems to be to divide his time between the club and the ballroom? Handsome he is, I admit, and graceful and good-mannered, and more's the pity, for those are factors that argue with a girl to whom they happen to appeal far more powerfully than the most flawless logic. No, John, to tell you the truth, I am sore perplexed."

"She doesn't marry him; that's flat."

"With all my heart. But it will not do to tell her so in that fashion. We must have patience, John; and, above all, retain her confidence, if possible."

"Humph! I have been patient for two years. How about the other one?"

"Constance?"

"Yes. Did you fancy that I had failed to notice that Percy White spends a large portion of time at this house?"

"So do several other young men."

"Gammon! You don't pretend to tell me that he is not devoted to Constance?"

"They are friends, of course." Mrs. Carleton paused and broke into a laugh. "You do notice more, John, than I give you credit for sometimes. I don't really know any more about it, though, than you do. If my daughters don't see fit to confide their love affairs to me, I can't compel them to, though it is sometimes a little hard to have them sit like graven images, and when you ask a harmless question, say, 'I don't know what you mean, mother,' or, 'really I haven't the least idea, mother.' I used to have an idea that when the time came I should be consulted and kept posted as to what was going on; but, come to think of it, I was just about as secretive at the same age, and if any one mentioned your name, John, I was prepared to shut up like an oyster. I fancy the poor child doesn't know her own mind. What should you say to him for a son-in-law?"

"He isn't good enough for her."

"But is any one?"

John Carleton shoved his hands into his pockets.

"I've never seen the man yet," he said.

"I am very fond of Percy," Mrs. Carleton continued, reflectively. "He is warm-hearted, bright and amiable, and I believe he has excellent abilities to succeed in whatever he undertakes, if only he will utilize them or undertake something worth while. But at present he is too much of a flibbertigibbet and too volatile. He glories in his narrow escapes from punishment and even in punishment itself; and though Ben is very loyal to him and says little, I can see that he does not approve of the way in which Percy wastes his time. While it will not be necessary, from the bread-and-butter point of view, for him to work, I dare say, as his father is such a rich man, still I should be very sorry to think that he was going to be content simply with amusing himself. Until that is clear, I shall feel in no hurry to encourage his courtship; for I have very little question, John, that he is in love with Constance. As I have intimated, she avoids all reference to the subject, and consequently I cannot say what her real feelings are, but I fancy that she likes him better than she is aware. Provided that he sobers down after leaving college, she might easily do worse. I don't know, my dear, which is the more serious responsibility, daughters or sons."

"They are both expensive enough," sighed the father. "What with dressmakers' bills and carriage bills for the girls and Ben's tuition fees and secret-society assessments and Harold's schooling, I sometimes get pretty desperate. Still, though I do not lay up anything, I have managed thus far to keep my head above water. God grant, after all our trouble and anxiety, that they turn out men and women who will be a comfort to us."

"I have no fears that they will not turn out well in the end, John. They are young and foolish, but if we can save them from fatal errors during the next few years, I feel sure that we shall be proud of them sooner or later. What I feel more concerned about, my husband, is that you should have to work so hard and that our expenses are so heavy. That is the only real mar to my happiness. When I see you come home at night looking so tired, I sometimes say to myself that we will pack up and go back to the country; only I really believe you would be sorry to go back to Highlands yourself, John."

"I should, Mary. I have become fond of the bricks and mortar, in spite of myself. You needn't bother about me, dear. Overwork is an American father's prerogative, and I am growing gray in a good cause. There they come," he added, detecting the sound of a latch-key at the front-door, which was followed by the pounding of feet and the murmur of voices.

"Come in and tell us all about it!" cried Mrs. Carleton.

"There isn't much to tell, mother. Same old story," said Ben, who was the first to enter, with his opera-hat perched on the back of his head and his scarf still about his neck. He had been going out every night during this second week of his college recess, which was just at an end.

Violet, who followed him, exclaimed mechanically, as though she were reciting a multiplication table, while she stood releasing her black lace *fichu* from her head and neck:

"I danced with Mr. Botsford, Walter Parker, Mr. Smiles, Mr. Davis and Harry Adams. I got six german favors and two bouquets, which I forgot to bring home. Good night, mother. Good night, father."

Thereupon, having performed in this perfunctory manner what was expected of her, she went upstairs with a weary air.

"She looks pale," said her mother, breaking the pause that followed Violet's somber departure, and she glanced appealingly at her eldest daughter, whose brow, however, though it reflected sympathy, remained sphinx-like.

Constance had perplexities of her own, but they were forgotten for the time in concern for the Ugly Duckling. She had noticed for a fortnight past the growing devotion of Randolph Davis for Miss Lina Harwood, a beauty of a type not unlike Violet's, and an heiress to boot. He had seemed hitherto to share his attentions between the two with mathematical fairness, but this evening, after shaking hands ceremoniously with his old flame, he had retired into a corner with the new one, and never quitted her side. Constance had been glad to see how indifferent Violet had appeared, notwithstanding, and that she had even seemed to be in rampant spirits, and to be enjoying herself more than usual. But when, after they had got into the carriage, she heard her speak, she realized, from her listless tone, that she had been merely playing a part, and her sisterly heart bled in consequence.

Bill followed Constance upstairs, carrying her wraps. He had a habit of dropping into her room before going to bed, after a party, and talking over the affairs of society in particular, and the problems of life—commonly his own life—in general. Constance, as was her wont, threw herself upon her bed with her hands clasped under her head. To tell the truth, so absorbed was she by Violet's unhappiness, to say nothing of her own affairs which were perplexing her, she would have preferred to be alone despite her devotion to Bill and her fondness for these midnight confabulations. Although Violet had never said a word to her about Randolph Davis, she had some time ago guessed the truth that her sister was no longer heart-whole; and while she herself had never much believed in Randolph, she had accepted him as her sister's lover, without a doubt as to his sincerity. But now the dreadful idea was thrust upon her that he had been merely flirting with Violet, an enormity of which the thought made her quiver with indignation, from head to foot.

The sight of Bill sitting on the edge of the sofa recalled her, however, to his requirements. She knew that he was waiting for her to introduce a topic in which he was deeply interested, so she said:

"I thought she looked particularly pretty this evening."

"Who?" asked Bill, who, though he understood her meaning perfectly well, was sometimes capricious and chose to appear obtuse on these occasions.

"Why, Ethel, of course. I saw you dancing with her two or three times."

"She had two other bouquets," he answered, gloomily. "Harry Salter sent one, I suppose, and I wonder who sent the other. She seemed to be pleased, though, with mine; she spoke about them. I don't think she ought to have seemed pleased unless she liked me a little."

"No-o, perhaps not," said Constance, doubtfully. "But, you remember, you were provoked the last time you sent her flowers because she didn't refer to them at all."

Bill squirmed in his seat, uneasily.

"I can't make out," he said, "whether she hates me or not."

"She doesn't hate you, Bill; I'm sure of that."

"Of course, she doesn't hate me literally. But it's the same thing if I bore her. Sometimes I think I do, for when I've been talking and she has had to answer she hasn't always been able to without showing that she hadn't been listening. If she were very much interested in me I think she'd always listen, don't you?"

"Ye-e-s—she ought to, of course. But it may have been an accident. She might not have been feeling well. For instance, the other evening my slipper hurt me so, that I scarcely knew what anybody was saying."

Here was a crumb of comfort for Bill, which he rolled over in his mind for a moment. Then he responded in rather a melancholy tone:

"It has happened twice at least. Her slipper couldn't have hurt her every time." But he added more cheerily: "One point I have noticed, though; she remembers conversations we've had a long time before. Only to-night she was reminding me of something I'd said six months ago, and which I'd quite forgotten. It shows she does notice sometimes. Don't you think it rather a good sign?"

"Indeed, I do; a very good sign."

"On the other hand," argued Bill, with a second squirm, "whenever I try to say anything that's—er—flattering—er—complimentary at all, she's apt to begin to laugh, so that I find it difficult to go on. It may be," he added, "that she hasn't any idea I'm in love with her." He spoke this last sentence almost with elation.

But Constance shook her head.

"She may not know you are in love with her; but she must appreciate that you like her, or you wouldn't be apt to be sending her flowers or asking her to go to walk on Sunday afternoons."

"Then you think it a bad sign that she laughs when I try to compliment her?"

"Rather, perhaps," answered poor Constance. "But it all depends on the way she does it. Maybe she is afraid you are going to propose to her."

"I mean to, soon," he answered, sternly. "I shall be admitted to the firm by the first of next January, and I suppose her father would contribute a little something, don't you?"

"I should think so, certainly. Perhaps that would be the best way," Constance added.

"What would?"

"To propose to her."

"In order to find out?"

"Yes."

"Then you think she may care for me?"

"I think she may."

"But you think she may not, also."

"You don't feel sure she does, yourself, Bill."

There was a short silence, during which Bill pulled at his lips and pondered. For six months he had been desperately devoted to Ethel Davis, and had had numerous discussions as to his chances, with Constance, to whom he had confided his passion. She had aided and abetted him in his suit, in every way that lay in her power, by devising excuses for asking Ethel to the house and throwing them together so far as she could, and by keeping a watch on the young woman in question so as to ascertain what the probabilities in his favor were, and whether or not she cared for any one else. Naturally she gave Bill all the comfort she could, and though he scrutinized ruefully every symptom that was against him, he was thankful for straws, and his hope was of an elastic kind. One day he would be in the doleful dumps, but the next would find him trustful that he was making progress with his Dulcinea.

Now, after studying the carpet for some minutes, with his head between his hands, Bill looked up and said:

"What do you really, honestly think as to my chances, Con? Do you believe she cares for me?"

"It is so difficult to tell, Bill," she said, turning red in her desire to give her brother all the encouragement she could conscientiously and yet not to deceive him. "I cannot tell how she appears when you are alone together. You ought to be the best judge yourself. I've tried hard to find out, and I have watched her when your name was mentioned, and sometimes I've thought she looked conscious, but then again I've thought not. I don't believe she cares for any one else; but I can't say one way or the other as to you. I do hope, though, for the best, my dear brother, and I shall welcome Ethel as a sister with all my heart."

"Don't count your chickens," he answered, moodily. "If she won't have me, though, I shall be perfectly miserable. It's foolish to talk about shooting one's self, or anything of that kind; but I sha' n't get over it in a hurry. Good night, Con; you're tired, and I'm boring you with this plaguy affair. The only way to get it off my mind is to ask her, as you say," he said, stooping to kiss her.

She put her arms around his neck and answered tenderly:

"As if I could ever be bored by anything that concerns you so deeply. If she doesn't take you, it'll only be because you're too good for her."

A fortnight later, and while Bill was still hovering on the brink of the proposal that would decide his fate, Constance was confronted with the question whether or not she would have Percy White. She had received an inkling from his remarks and manner for some time back that he was determined to tell her of his love, but she had hoped, until it was too late and the words were actually spoken, he would let matters remain as they were.

She had been trying to make up her mind about Percy for a year, without exactly asking herself if she would marry him. There was no certainty, of course, that he intended to make her an offer; but she had reasoned that it was only fitting that she should come to a definite conclusion regarding his character. The more she reflected in respect to that, the more she shook her head. Percy was always charming when he was talking to her, but away from her Percy had become more and more idle and volatile, and she could not help feeling that he had degenerated into an easy-going fellow, who lived simply to amuse himself. When she had questioned Ben, the only comfort she could extract was that Percy was the most popular fellow in college and the leading spirit in all the societies. But when cross-examined, Ben could not deny that Percy seemed utterly indifferent to everything else but having a fine time. Actuated by the desire that her friendship should prove itself worthy of the name, she had, now and again, when he assumed a serious tone and disclosed the brilliant possibilities of which he believed himself capable, ventured to remonstrate with him for not making the most of the present. It was all very well to talk about the future and tell what he was going to do; but what reason was there for supposing that he would do any better by and by than now? If he was eager to make a name for himself, why did he not begin to lay the foundation for distinction at once?

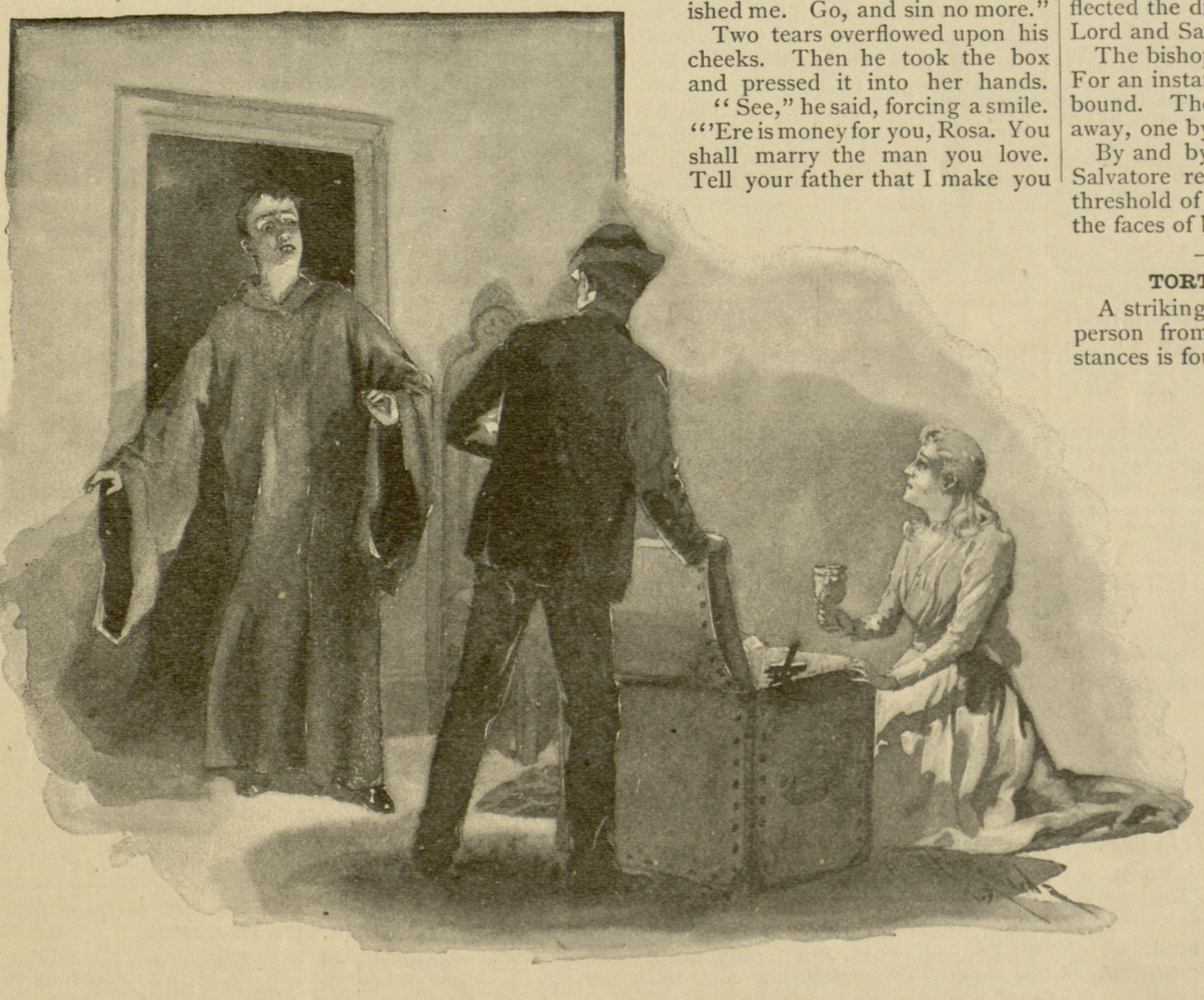
[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 5.]

PADRE SALVATORE.

BY THE MARQUISE CLARA LANZA.

[CONCLUDED.]

Padre Salvatore was generally a light sleeper, but on this occasion fatigue made his rest more profound than usual. All at once, however, he wakened with alarm, for his sleep-dulled hearing had caught a sound that assailed him with dread and terror. He sat up in his narrow iron bedstead and listened. Surely, he had heard it. He had not been dreaming. He had distinctly heard the church-door creak on its rusty old hinges. He sprang from the bed, and peered through the curtainless window. The church was shrouded now in darkness. The moonlight had vanished beneath a vail of clouds. He began hurriedly to dress, trembling violently. Somebody was in the church. His trained ear had not deceived him even in his sleep. Some one was there; some thief had gone in to steal the relics. An intense excitement, from which, however, all fear was eliminated, took possession of him. He did not stop to think of himself or any danger he might incur. He only thought of the holy relics that were to him a sacred trust. If they were stolen, it should be at the risk of his own life. He would preserve them at any cost. He must hasten to save them from the desecrating hands of robbers—perhaps assassins. He remembered his pistol that was lying in the drawer of the study-table. It had recently been cleaned and loaded. He thrust it beneath a fold of his *soutane*, and went out. With his hot Italian blood seething madly in his veins, he mounted the steps of the church, and tried the handle of the door. That yielded easily to his touch. He slipped into the darkness of the interior, breathing hard. A vertigo seized him. Near the altar, a mild bar of nebulous moonlight streamed through a window and touched the image of Mary. Padre Salvatore dipped his cold fingers into the holy-water basin, crossed himself, and bent his knee. Then, fortified by this simple ceremony, he advanced with bold carriage and firm tread into the sacristy. As he threw open the door, appearing on the threshold as might the black shade of an avenging power, a faint brightness struck his eyes, confusing him for an instant. Then he recoiled, with an involuntary cry of horror and dismay.



Crouching on the bare floor beside the oaken chest and grasping the golden chalice so that it glinted in the light, was Rosa, pale and terrified, while before her, holding an uplifted candle whose flickering flame shed a dim brilliance on Padre Salvatore's face, stood a stranger—a young man. His frightened glance swept the priest, and he uttered an exclamation of surprise. Padre Salvatore had grown livid. He staggered back against the door, and the pistol fell clattering to the floor. Presently he summoned courage to speak.

"What—what you do here, Rosa?" he asked, in hardly audible tones. "Why you disturb the relics?" He seemed to gain courage from the sound of his own voice. He drew himself up and crossed both arms over his chest. "You would steal—you?" he said, passionately. "An' for what? For whom?" He pointed with one finger to her companion. His pallid face flushed scarlet. "Is it—is it—for him, Rosa?"

She burst into tears and did not answer.

"'Ow came you by the key? Answer me," he said, imperiously.

"I took it while you slept. Oh, do not look at me like that! Forgive me. If you only knew—"

The young man had lowered the candle and stood with averted gaze, biting his lips until they bled. Padre Salvatore took no notice. He came forward, took the chalice gently in his hands, put it back into the chest and turned the key in the lock. He wheeled about and strode out of the sacristy, holding his head aloft.

"Come back to the 'ouse—both," he said, briefly.

Dazed and ashamed, they followed him through the echoing aisle of the church. When they reached the house, Padre Salvatore was standing in the reception-room, drawn up to his full height, his hand resting upon the bare center-table. He had lighted the kerosene lamp, and in its wan radiance his features looked gray and rigid. He appeared to have aged horribly.

"Who is he—this person?" he inquired, unsteadily, not meeting Rosa's glance.

She turned her eyes imploringly upon the young man, who answered for her. Padre Salvatore listened like one who only half understands. He heard the miserable little love story with compressed lips and fixed gaze. He comprehended as in a dream that the two had long desired to marry, but that Rosa's father had opposed the match because the suitor had no money to establish himself in business, and no prospect of getting any. So that was why Rosa had been sent away to visit the priest. Her father thought she would forget her foolish attachment. But she had not forgotten, nor had her lover forgotten. He had found out where she was, and had come to the island to persuade her to run away and get married in St. Ignace. She had consented. They had met several times in the village, and all their arrangements were made. Only they had no money; merely a few dollars, which were insufficient. She had thought of the relics which were worth a great deal, and were of no use to anybody, lying in the old chest in the sacristy. That was all.

A blush of shame dyed Padre Salvatore's colorless cheeks. For a brief space he could not speak. Then he asked vaguely:

"There was no other objection to your marriage? Only the money?"

"No, there was no other objection," they said.

Padre Salvatore knit his brows.

"It is well," he said, moving toward the door. "We can talk to-morrow; now it is late."

He ushered the young man with ceremonious courtesy to the portico without; then he closed and bolted the door. His white lips trembled.

No more was said. He motioned to Rosa, and led the way upstairs, carrying the lamp uplifted, so that the yellow glimmer illumined one side of his face. He passed into the study, and, sinking upon a chair, leaned his head upon his hands. He remained thus until the night was far spent, struggling bitterly with himself. A fearful blight seemed to have fallen upon him and crushed his buoyant spirit. Rosa's sin resembled some bitter disgrace of his own. Yet, try as he would, he harbored no anger against her; he felt naught but a tender pity. The gray morning found him still sitting there, but now a look of determination shone in his eyes. By and by he rose, and, approaching the small hair trunk, that occupied one corner of the room, removed therefrom a wooden box, that he opened almost lovingly. It contained five hundred dollars, that by dint of enforced self-denial he had saved since his residence in America, and that he had meant to send at Christmas to his mother—an old, hard-working Neapolitan peasant. How much personal sacrifice was involved in this handful of gold no one but himself knew. Many a time he had gone without meat and clothes in order to save the money for his mother. Often, as he sat alone during the long winter evenings, warmed only by the lamp-light, he had pictured to himself her joy when she should receive the gift. He imagined the tears of happiness coursing down her brown withered cheeks. He saw her calling to the neighbors to tell them who had sent it, and how it had come all the way from America, a wonderful country where the very streets were paved with gold.

Padre Salvatore's own eyes glistened as he placed the money on the table. Then, seeing that it was five o'clock, he recited his office and made preparation for the early mass. Rosa was waiting for him on his return from the church. She silently put the earthenware cup of strong coffee and the plate of dry bread upon the table, but as she turned to leave the room, he called her back. At the sight of his white, quivering face she broke down, sobbing and imploring his pardon.

He took her hand in his, murmuring soothingly in Italian a verse from the Gospel:

"'Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone.'"

Aloud he said, trying to be calm:

"I am very sorry, Rosa, but I do not condemn. I, too, am sinner. I have offended God, an' He punished me. Go, and sin no more."

Two tears overflowed upon his cheeks. Then he took the box and pressed it into her hands.

"See," he said, forcing a smile. "'Ere is money for you, Rosa. You shall marry the man you love. Tell your father that I make you present; then it be all right. Now go; I much occupied."

He almost pushed her from the room. He sat down to drink his coffee. A cheerful smile was on his lips.

When Rosa had gone, the village people, in spite of their vigilance, rarely saw him for days and days, except when he appeared at mass or to hear confession. He began to practice a desperate economy. The thought of his mother tortured him night and morning. He felt as if he had robbed her in her old age, and he prayed for forgiveness. He denied himself wine and macaroni, living on dry bread, with now and then a little fish. He sold a few things he did not need, and he saved nearly the whole of his meager salary. In this way he hoped to send her something substantial at Christmas. But he had, in that short period, grown haggard and pinched and broken. The people remarked his changed appearance and put their own construction upon it.

"*Hé!*" they whispered among themselves. "We know! It is all on account of *la p'tite* he kept with him for so long and who left so suddenly. He said she was his cousin, but we know better. Now, next week comes *M'sieu l' Evêque*, and then *le Père* Salvatore shall see that we are not so blind and stupid as he thinks us. He shall be told everything—*M'sieu l' Evêque*. The *Curé* Salvatore is a bad man. He is not like the French priest we had last year."

And when the bishop came in the evening preceding the ceremony of confirmation, the people assembled in a great mass near Padre Salvatore's door, hesitating as to whether they should march boldly in and demand an audience, or summon His Reverence outside. While they waited and took counsel among themselves a bright light shone all at once in the tiny parlor, and on the old worn linen blind were reflected the pale silhouettes of two figures—one tall and portly, that of the bishop, standing with outstretched hands, as if granting benediction. The other figure was smaller and appeared to be bowed in supplication.

"*Oh, hé! l' Père* Salvatore, he is making confession, as, indeed, he ought," the people murmured. "The bishop will come out and tell us how bad he is."

The door opened presently, and on the dark threshold the bishop's form and that of Padre Salvatore stood out against the light. Something in the bishop's face caused the people to fall back in dismay. Padre Salvatore was white as death, and his shrunken limbs seemed lost in the long, loose folds of the bishop's coat that he wore. The sleeves hung down and hid his emaciated hands. The bishop waited for a moment before he spoke.

"My friends," he began, in vibrant tones, and with that he extended one arm; and placing it about Padre Salvatore's neck, gathered him to his side as he might a child in distress—"my friends," he repeated, after a significant pause, "I bring you your pastor, a worthy son of God. I commend you to his care and his teaching, the more so, as lately you have condemned him unjustly in your hearts. For, verily, in the pure soul of Padre Salvatore is reflected the divine spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour."

The bishop made the sign of the cross. For an instant the people stood as if spellbound. Then, without a word, they slunk away, one by one.

By and by only the bishop and Padre Salvatore remained standing on the chill threshold of the illuminated doorway, and the faces of both were wet with tears.

◆

TORTONIA THE BANKER.

A striking instance of the elevation of a person from humble to exalted circumstances is found in the life of Tortonia, a celebrated banker of Rome, whose father was nothing more than a *valet de place*, or a guide, who showed about strangers for hire. Tortonia, who was an active, intelligent young man, at first entered into business in a small way as a jeweler. In course of time he became a sort of banker; and an unexpected circumstance brought him in contact with Cardinal Chiaramonti. On the death of Pope Pius VI., a conclave was to be held at Venice for the election of a new pope. Chiaramonti had expectations of being elected to the vacant office, but he was unable to attend the conclave for want of money. In this emergency he was supplied with a few hundred crowns by Tortonia. The cardinal now repaired to Venice, where, in the church of St. George, he was elected pope, under the title of Pius VII. In gratitude for this act of service, the sovereign pontiff, on his return to Rome, appointed Tortonia banker to the court. He was created a marquis, and afterward a duke, and became one of the richest capitalists in Europe.

◆

A COLLECTION OF CURIOUS BOOKS.

At Warsenstein, in Germany, there is, perhaps, one of the most curiously original collections of books extant. Outwardly, the volumes present the common appearance of a block of wood, and that is the first impression; but a minute examination reveals the fact that each is a complete history of the particular tree which it represents. At the back of the book the bark has been removed from a space which allows the scientific and the common name of the tree to be placed as a title for the book. One side is formed from the split wood of the tree, showing its grain and natural fracture; the other shows the wood when worked smooth and varnished. One end shows the grain as left by the saw, and the other the finely polished wood.

On opening the book, it is found to contain the fruit, seeds, leaves and other products of the tree; the moss which usually grows upon its trunk, and the insects which feed upon the different parts of the tree. These are supplemented by a well printed description of the habits, usual location and manner of growth of the tree. In fact, everything which has a bearing upon that certain tree secures a place in this wonderful, useful and valuable collection. Here is a precedent for the various botanical societies to adopt, and although, doubtless, expensive, yet it will certainly repay in its utility.

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THE ENGLISH GIRL AND THE AMERICAN GIRL.

In "Over the Tea-Cups," that remarkable product of an octogenarian brain, Doctor HOLMES introduces two young women, the one an English and the other an American girl, and contrasts them in a lively and instructive way. He describes the English girl as the rosier and the heartier of the two; the American girl as more delicate in features, more mobile and excitable, but suggesting the thought that she would tire out before the other. He points out, also, that, although both of the young women are very inquisitive, very fond of asking questions, there is this curious difference between them: The English girl settles down into her answers and is quiet; the American girl is never satisfied with yesterday's conclusions, but is always reopening old questions in the light of some new fact or novel idea.

It is interesting to note the view of the same topic taken by another American, Mr. W. W. STORY, who has, perhaps, had larger opportunities of comparing the two types. Mr. STORY says that if you put an English girl beside an American girl whose ancestry is pure English, you will perceive a striking difference in shape, nature and color. The American, as a rule, is slenderer, paler, slighter-limbed, thinner-featured and more vivacious and excited in manner. The English girl is fuller, rosier in color, heavier in build and calmer. From the view-point of complexion, the one suggests a lily and the other a rose. The voice of the American is thin and sharp, that of the English girl is rich and low. But according to Mr. STORY, the greatest difference is in the feet and hands. The American's foot is small, thin, high-arched and tendonous in the ankle. The English girl's is plump, flat and full in the ankle. There is the same contrast in the hands. Then, again, although an Englishwoman's voice is more pleasant to hear in conversation, American girls sing better, for the English can never fully utter their voice and throw it out.

◆

LET CHILDREN PLAY.

From the nursery to the narrow house is but a short journey, and in the brief space between the two termini the pleasantest domain ought to be that of childhood. Children alone, of human beings, have the capacity for unadulterated enjoyment. Their childhood, therefore, should be the holiday of life; its slave-day will soon be upon them, and then farewell forever to the merry world without a responsibility, a fear or a care, which is their rightful abiding-place until borne out into the tumult and the strife of the great maelstrom. Tasks they must learn, duties they must be taught; but those who know how to interest the developing mind, and to feed it wisely and well with the elements of knowledge, can make education one of childhood's pleasures.

If every child could be properly instructed intellectually, morally and religiously, a very few generations would suffice to bring about the millennium, and if the foundations of a life-long cheerfulness could be at the same time laid, by affording to all children full opportunities for innocent enjoyment, what a merry millennium it would be. That being out of the question, let us do the best we can. Away with all the tribe of humbugs who put children into strait-jackets—who would *cram* them in school, and make automata of them out of it. Teach the children winningly. Make knowledge attractive to them. Let them frolic unrestrainedly.

Some children are utterly broken down physically and mentally by over-education. Others have no education at all. Of the twain, the former are more to be pitied. The uneducated can afterward educate themselves; but children who have had the vitality and spirits of their youth dragooned out of them by martinet teachers can never repair the damage that has been done to their bodies and minds by over-tasking.

◆

AMERICANISMS.

Of course, the English language is often incorrectly spoken in England as well as in this country, but, to be profitable, criticism, like charity, ought to begin at home.

That we are improving, no one will dispute whose memory goes back for a generation, but it will do us no harm to recall certain words and phrases still current among us for which there really is no justification. Why, for instance, do we now "inaugurate" whatever we do not "initiate," apparently without any idea of what the words signify? Why do we so often "commence" when we begin? Why do we give "ovations" to people, evidently not having rotten eggs in mind? Why do we call an edition of a newspaper an "issue," as if it were something that could be healed? Why do we have "recitals" of music on a piano-forte, when we do not speak of playing pictures on a canvas?

Why do we say "ain't" for "isn't," and "don't" for "doesn't?" Why do we "indorse" anything except commercial paper and legal documents? Why do we say "square" meal, when "round" used to be the epithet for things that are perfect and honest and admirable? Why do we assert that we "have got" a thing, when "have" will suffice, and why do we make the pleonasm worse by the affectation of correctness—"gotten?" Why for "station" or "railway station" do we substitute "depot," which is neither English nor French?

On what ground do we declare that we do not "feel like" doing something, meaning that we are not inclined to do it? One may feel like an ass, but how can one feel like doing, or, worse, like eating something? Sometimes one even hears the phrase: "Do you feel like beefsteak?" How, pray, does a beefsteak feel? Why should we use "ever so much" for "very much," or describe a man as "perfectly lovely?"

In English, the adverb "quite" means "entirely," "completely;" but when we say that some one is "quite well," we mean not that he is perfectly but only tolerably well. We even see in America the phrase, "quite a number of persons," as if one number was not as much of a number as another. We talk of a "prominent" citizen, intending to describe him not as protuberant, but simply as eminent. Then, again, we ask a friend to "come round" to-morrow, though he may have only to come straight across the street. We say: "You are hereby notified," instead of: "It is hereby notified to you," and we speak of a fact "transpiring," as if a fact were endowed with an apparatus for breathing.

Why do we deem it elegant to say that a thing was "intimated," when we mean that it was said? And why do we think it sounds fine to speak of a thing being "definitely arranged," when we mean that it was definitely or finally settled? The answer to most of these questions is obviously that such mistakes are made by persons who do not remember, or who have not reflected on the etymology of the words mentioned, which, of course, supplies the key to their true meaning and right use.

◆

POWER OF WILL.

The influence of a powerful will in arresting or retarding the progress of a disease apparently fatal is one of the most wonderful of all mental phenomena. A person of feeble frame, but of a determined and hopeful spirit, sometimes keeps death at bay for weeks, months—even years, and finally, in defiance of the physicians who have sat in judgment on his case and pronounced it utterly hopeless, recovers and returns to his customary vocations. On the other hand, a man of strong physique not unfrequently wilts and dies under a comparatively controllable ailment simply from a lack of the mental energy which enables the strong-willed weakling to repel the Destroyer.

ANDREW JACKSON, when physically a wreck and carrying lead enough in him to kill a weak man, was able, by the force of his will, to triumph over disease and at the same time hold a regiment of mutinous soldiers in check.

With a cheerful disposition, indomitable resolution and courage and a firm trust in the Being who helps those who help themselves, it is astonishing to what an extent the gravest physical evils may be ameliorated, and how often they may be overcome.

◆

GOOD WORK BY OUR READERS.

The proprietors of the *Ledger* are in receipt of many letters from new subscribers saying that they send in their subscriptions because a friend who is a reader of the *Ledger* has recommended it to them. The publishers of the *Ledger* thank these numerous patrons who have so kindly set forth the merits of the paper to their friends, and thus assisted in increasing its subscription list.

The quality of the reading matter in a publication bears very much the same relation to its circulation as the temperature of the atmosphere does to a thermometer. When the matter in a paper is particularly good, it creates much talk among the readers, and this talk is the means of attracting new readers. Hence it is the duty of all publishers who wish their readers to recommend their paper to their friends to print matter of such great interest that the readers will be justified in recommending the paper. If every reader will tell his friends that the *Ledger* is filled with the writings of the most popular authors of the day, as our readers know it is, and that it is only two dollars a year, he will make a great increase in the subscription list, and be doing a favor to his friends at the same time. This will be a very easy matter for each reader to do, and the result will be of great importance to the *Ledger*.

We sincerely thank our readers for what they have done in this respect, and hope they will see how many friends they can recommend the *Ledger* to during the coming month.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER.

[From the Christian at Work.]

This popular weekly has taken a new start lately, and is becoming much more attractive than ever. We notice they have the best the literary world can afford by way of contributors, including such as Mrs. Amelia E. Barr, Hon. George Bancroft, James Russell Lowell, Harriet Prescott Spofford and a host of others.

THE "MONT DE PIETE" IN PARIS.

A unique institution in Paris is the "Mont de Piété," a government pawnshop, the profits of which are handed over to the hospitals. To meet its demands, the Mont de Piété borrows money like the Treasury; it issues bonds at twelve, six, or even three months, the interest of which, fixed by Council, varies from three and a half to five per cent. These bonds are in great credit among small capitalists, who, on an average, bring forty million of francs to the institution, in which they have an entire confidence. Only the amount necessary to its daily transactions is kept at its bank; the remainder is deposited in the Treasury, at an unvarying interest of three per cent. The holders of these bonds belong almost entirely to the class of greengrocers, fruit and vegetable growers, job-masters, a class of economical and saving tendencies.

HOW THE PAWNING IS DONE.

To avoid crowding and obstruction, there are two distinct pawning or *engagement* offices, called first and second divisions. In the former, jewelry, precious stones and valuables of small compass are received; in the latter, the motley collection of other pledges, styled "parcels." At the farthest end of a yard, a narrow passage leads to a gloomy paved hall; two or three wooden benches stand against the walls, a large glazed cage occupies the back space, provided with a wicket so arranged that the lender and the borrower cannot see each other's face. Behind the partition, in the full light of day, the employés are seated around a horse-shoe table. The Commissaire appraiser placed nearest to the window has by him a magnifying glass, a touchstone, a bottle of nitric acid and a pair of scales; next to him is a clerk provided with a pile of printed and numbered receipt forms. Two men, in striped linen blouses, occupying stools near the table, are respectively in charge of a lighted gas-jet, sealing-wax, brown paper, innumerable boxes, stout thread and needles. Hovering between the wicket and the table is an official who weighs the deposits, and together they form the contingent necessary to the conclusion of an *engagement*.

In the slang of the place, every one coming to pawn is a "*public*;" he places his article on the board of the wicket, whence it is taken by the weigher and thrown into the scales; its nature, gold or silver, and weight are announced aloud before it is handed to the appraiser, who counts the precious stones, if there are any, tests it, verifies the quality of the metal, and affixes a value, which ninety-nine times out of a hundred is accepted without protest. The writing-clerk gives the "public," now become an *engagiste*, a counter bearing the last two figures of the number on the bulletin of registration, on which is stated at length the value and the nature of the deposit, also the sum lent on it; it is signed by the appraiser and dropped through a slit into an adjacent room, where it is taken up by three other clerks, who make separate and detailed entries into their respective ledgers.

In the second division for miscellaneous articles the proceedings are similar; some of the articles brought are so valueless that it is out of mere charity that the minimum loan of three francs is awarded. In another portion of the building is the office of the Director, where secret *engagements* can be made. The clients there are of various ranks and classes, mostly people who are morbidly afraid of publicity, and fear to be recognized at the common wicket, and their names divulged. The article they offer is sent down to the appraisers, and goes through the same routine, but the pledger's name is written on a special book kept under lock and key, and remains known only to the Director.

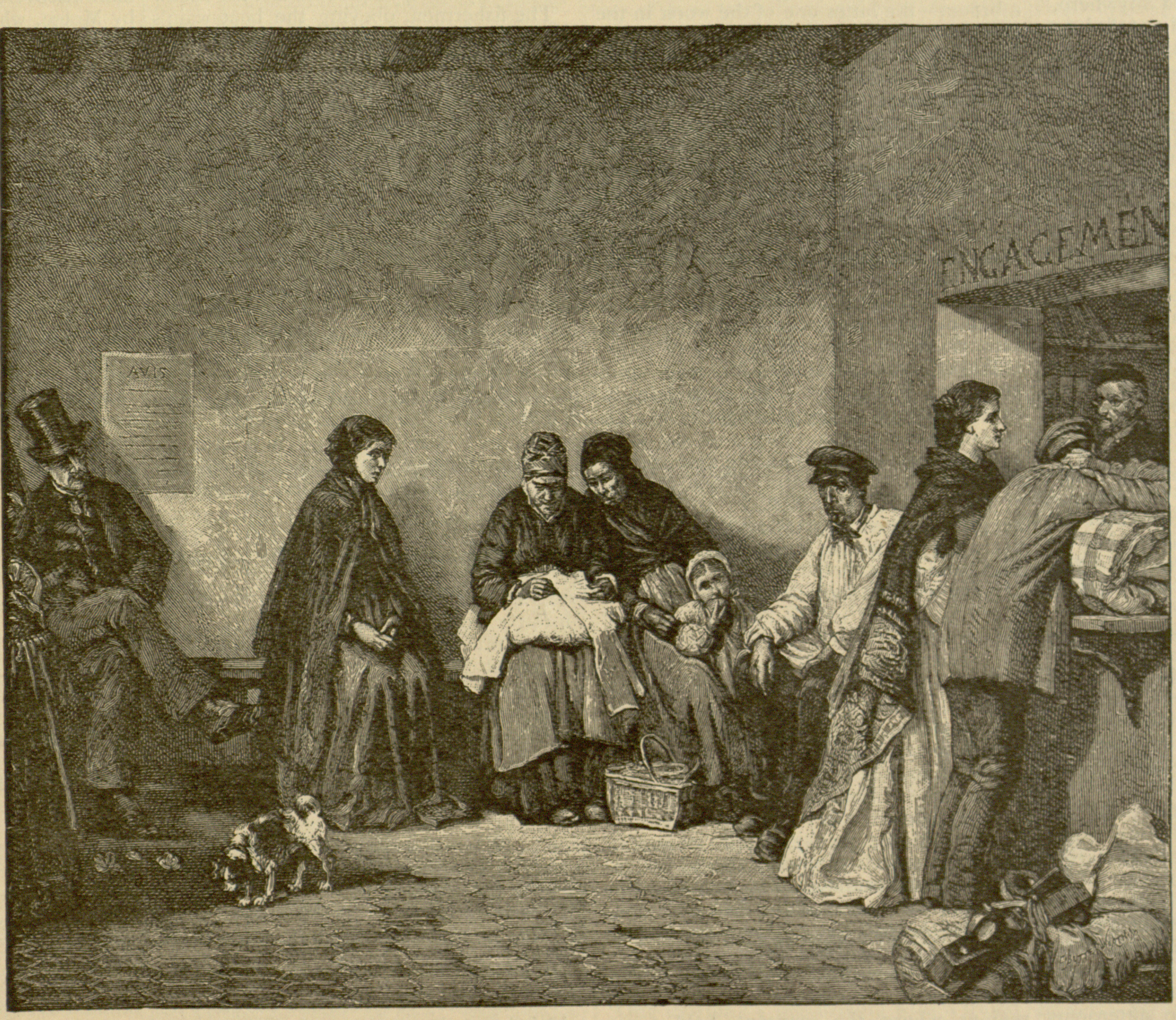
THE STOREROOMS.

The Mont de Piété being responsible for the goods warehoused, its storerooms are under watchful supervision; like the pawning offices, they are in two corresponding divisions. The first, for jewelry and sealed boxes, is on the first-floor; they are, as they arrive, inscribed in ledgers of which the colors, white, pink, yellow and green, vary every year; thus, supposing it to be yellow, every paper and document for that year is of the same tint; this is to facilitate researches and identifications.

The warehouses for the miscellaneous "parcels" are in a distinct building of three stories; the packages, which are often large and cumbrous, require a great deal of room. Bedding, of which there are large quantities, is stored under the roof; it especially abounds in the branch offices; in the Rue Servan, for example, there have been warehoused as many as eight thousand eight hundred mattresses at a time; some depositors bring a dozen at once, probably schoolmasters or lodging-house keepers without pupils or boarders. The lower rooms contain more furniture than any upholsterer's or cabinet-maker's shop; the walls of brick and iron are fireproof. On the ground-floor are the carriages and other vehicles, with the heavy iron goods, machines and a vast number of workmen's tools.

REDEEMING THE PLEDGES.

The number of deposits averages yearly about one million eight hundred thousand, the secret ones only amounting to four thousand. As a rule, they remain at the Mont de Piété from seven to eight months, when they are redeemed. The owner presents himself in a large hall, where he is confronted by several wickets, behind each of which are two clerks. His pawn-ticket is received by a controlling official, who calculates the interest per fortnight, except for the first month, which is always charged at six per cent. per annum. He adds three per cent. for keep and "*manutention*," and one per cent. for the appraising commissioners, makes up the sum total, and inscribes the figure on the recognizance, or pawn bulletin, which he then passes on to his colleague, an employé of the cash office, who has to verify the amount and to collect the money from the depositor, who is now called a *dégagiste*. In exchange for payment the latter receives a counter with a red or a black number according to the division in which his property is stored, and which is in fact a power of discharge. Armed with it he proceeds to the *salle de rendition*, an uninviting apartment provided with forms and over which a policeman watches. Meanwhile the bulletin has been forwarded to the special warehouse designated thereon, the article in question found and delivered to the controller, who verifies that it answers the description and who signs the document., Both are sent up to the *salle de rendition* and given up to the "returning" clerk behind his wicket; he is bound to see that the strings or seals have not been tampered with, and to examine the contents; if they tally with the declaration he stamps the letter with a special seal, which stands in lieu of his signature, and the owner is summoned to receive his property.



The time that elapses between the first claiming of the deposit and its delivery is thirty-five minutes; but it has happened as often as five or six times a year that the article released at one wicket by payment has not been waited for at the other, and no explanation has ever been given of this mysterious conduct; those goods are forever lost to their proprietor, and sold with the unredeemed ones when the moment arrives.

There is a strange fancy for renewing the pledges by paying at the end of the year the interest due; some of the deposits seem fated never to leave the Mont de Piété. One old umbrella had been renewed forty-seven times, when a member of the council of supervision, seeing it always in the same place covered with fresh tickets like scales, took pity on it, paid the expenses, and had it restored to its master, who was incensed at the impertinence of any one daring to offer him alms. A white calico curtain, paid for by renewed interest for twenty years, was finally sold, after having brought in more than seven times its original value. And these are but examples in a thousand.

THE DAILY AUCTIONS.

The regulations of the Mont de Piété stipulate that the articles pawned shall be kept thirteen months, but this period is usually extended to fourteen and even in special cases a further limit has been granted to those who petitioned for it; it may, therefore, be said that generally the deposits are not sold before the fifteenth month. The owner is invariably warned beforehand by letter that his property will be sold at such a date by public auction and informed that should the proceeds of the sale exceed the sum due by him to the establishment, according to the terms of his schedule, the surplus—called *boni*—will be held at his disposal for three months, after which it will go to the hospital funds. The proportion of unredeemed pledges averages five in a hundred for the ordinary loans, and one in a hundred for the secret *engagements*.

The articles doomed to be sold are taken from their place in the warehouses and carried to a large apartment over the auction room, where they are verified by comparison with the original registration bulletin, and then sent below. The general public always knows what category of goods is to be disposed of, as they are classified by an invariable rule. On Monday, *bric-à-brac* and books are sold; on Wednesdays, the better class of fabrics, laces and shawls; on Thursdays, jewelry and precious stones; on the remaining days, the hybrid and miscellaneous "parcels," some of which are also put up on Thursday, when the stock of valuables is exhausted, which generally occurs about three o'clock. Any article put up for sale, even when already bid upon, can be claimed by its legitimate owner at the last second, provided the auctioneer's hammer has not fallen. Of the three hundred and seventy or four hundred articles sold daily, this redemption *in extremis* occurs six or seven times, proving how dilatoriness in business, even when of vital importance, is an idiosyncrasy of the pettifogging community.

The buyers are characteristically different according to the day, even according to the hour, and have each a distinct physiognomy. On Wednesday the female element predominates; women—well but showily dressed, mostly second-hand wardrobe sellers, having a keen eye for laces, Cashmere shawls, and the better kind of fashionable, little-worn costumes. On Thursdays, during the time when diamonds are offered, the Semitic type is in the ascendant; there are men present who can judge of a stone at a single glance and detect a flaw with a dead certainty; the Jews form a ring, and if any outsider, tempted by the hope of a good bargain, attempts to bid, the community closes around him, and he is promptly made to recognize the futility of his expectations. On Monday morning the peculiar brogue of the *Auvergnat* dealer in kettles, brass, iron pots and old iron is heard raising the price by one *sou* at a time; books have few amateurs, and are promptly disposed of in parcels mostly unexamined by the purchasers; common wearing apparel, chiefly men's, is handled and judged of with marvelous dexterity; but the greatest excitement apparently prevails over the bedding. Mattresses are turned, poked, punched, pricked, smelt, to ascertain their quality, age and contents; the buying public, in its unclean but expressive popular jocularity, calls the sale of these articles "swinging the bug" *(balancer la punaise)*.

WHY THE DRESSMAKERS PAWN.

A large proportion of entirely new goods is pawned. When an artisan *en chambre*—that is, working at home for a master or factory—dressmakers and small manufacturers find themselves momentarily embarrassed or pressed for cash, they will not pawn their watch, spoons, clock or clothes, but any one of the articles they have completed. Perhaps a dressmaker has a dress length given to her to make up for one customer, and a gown half finished for another; in order to buy buttons and trimmings for the one, she will pawn the untouched material, get the things she wants, complete the dress, take it home with the bill, and if she gets the latter paid, hurry to the Mont de Piété and redeem the other fabric; should she be kept waiting for her money, she pawns something else to go on with her orders, and by these transactions many of those belonging to the infinitesimally small *petit commerce* of Paris are enabled to carry on their profession and keep the wolf from the door. The whole class of these home workers, and even others who labor on a more extended scale, have experienced the boon which the facility of raising money on the spot is to them, and the Mont de Piété may be called the benefactor of petty trade.

It has been erroneously supposed that a stagnation in trade, a commercial or financial crisis bringing large failures, must necessarily increase the business of the Mont de Piété; on the contrary, for the reasons stated above, as soon as business is less brisk and no sales are executed, its operations decrease in proportion, and it becomes merely an immense storage place.

THE PEOPLE WHO PAWN.

Once a young foreigner living in Paris had lost largely at cards; with his sister's consent he carried her diamonds to the Mont de Piété, received a considerable sum in exchange, paid his debt, but, yielding to his master passion, gambled again, incurred heavier losses, and to meet them, disposed of his pawn voucher to a low jobber, who, without his knowledge, immediately redeemed the diamonds, broke up the settings and sold the stones to a wealthy young fellow who was about to marry. The Mont de Piété is naturally entirely disinterested in such affairs; its own share in the transaction ceases when the correct ticket is handed in, the interest paid and the pledge returned to the holder. However, after a time, the young foreigner being once more in luck, and his sister claiming her jewelry, he went to the jobber to get back the voucher, only to find the stones beyond his reach. They were traced with the utmost difficulty to a first-class jeweler, who was resetting them for the bridegroom. Fortunately, the two men belonged to the same set, and were able to come to an arrangement by which the stones were restored to their original possessor; otherwise it is more than probable that the law would have been called upon to interfere, and to demand by what right the depositor of the diamonds had disposed of a recognizance* for valuables which did not belong to him.

The very poor do not frequent the Mont de Piété, although at first sight they should seem to be its chief clients. The most flagrant proof of their abstention was made evident on several occasions, but especially in 1871, when England, actuated by a generous sympathy for the sufferings and privations of Paris during the siege, forwarded, as soon as the blockade was raised, substantial and abundant help. Among other sums, one of four thousand dollars was sent to be especially devoted to the redemption of workmen's tools supposed to have been pawned during the distressing period of forced inactivity. The British committee apologized for the smallness of the sum, which must necessarily be ludicrously disproportionate to the exigencies of the case, expressing a hope that it might be further supplemented. The appeal made by the Mont de Piété to the clients belonging to the category to be benefited by the English donation was as loud and public as it well could be, and yet only two thousand three hundred and eighty-three tools were claimed and delivered, the cost of redeeming them amounting only to two thousand five hundred dollars, thus leaving a considerable surplus of the fund devoted to their redemption. At that time the warehouses of the institution contained one million seven hundred and eight thousand five hundred and forty-seven articles, representing loans to the amount of seven million five hundred thousand dollars. The difference between this enormous total and the fractionary figure representing artisans' tools speaks for itself, and disposes of the fiction that genuine destitution pledges its means of livelihood; had it left pledges at the Mont de Piété it would have hastened to recover gratuitous possession of them. The majority of the tools are pawned by the employers. If a man gives work to six or seven hands and has to suspend labor for some cause or other, he dismisses them and pawns the plant till he can repiace his workshop on the usual footing. Sculptors will sometimes pledge their chisels or even fragments of a commenced statue or group in a moment of sudden difficulty.

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* The pawn-ticket is really a receipt to the bearer, and it is sufficient to present it to enter into possession of the article it represents.

THE IDENTITY OF NATURE.

The lark now carols the same song and in the same key as when Adam first turned his enraptured ear to catch the moral. The owl first hooted in B flat, and it still loves the key. The three chirps of the cricket have been in B since Tubal Cain first heard them in his smithy, or the Israelites in their ash-ovens. Never has the buzz of the gnat risen above the second A, nor that of the house-fly's wing sunk below the first F.

Sound had at first the same connection with color as it has now. The tulip, in its first bloom in Noah's garden, emitted heat four and a half degrees above the atmosphere, as it does at the present day. The stormy petrel as much delighted to sport amongst the first billows which the Indian Ocean ever raised as it does now. Birds that lived on flies laid bluish eggs in the days of Joseph, as they will two thousand years hence, if the sun should not fall from his throne, or the earth not break her harness from the planetary car. The first bird that was caged oftener sung in *adagio* than in its natural spirit. Corals have ever grown edgeways to the ocean stream. Eight million two hundred and eighty thousand animalculæ could as well live in a drop of water in the days of Seth as now. The bees that afforded Eve her first honey made their combs hexagonal. There was iron enough in the blood of the first forty-two men to make a ploughshare, as there is to-day.

SERGEANT MORIARTY—OF THE 47TH.

BY JAMES FREDERICK HERRICK.

Belated and weary from a hard day's work in the city, I was hurrying on a stormy winter's evening through an ill-lighted street to the ferry that carried me home. Just under a lamp-post, I was confronted by a tall, gaunt and poorly clad form, and a hoarse voice exclaimed:

"For the love of God, help a starving man on this bitter night."

There was nothing about the mendicant to attract more than ordinary attention, but the hand extended for alms fascinated and checked me. It was only the remnant of a hand, mutilated cruelly, and then so carelessly dressed, that it had healed with unsightly scars. I recognized it at once, although I had not seen it for over twenty years, and, as I started back, I involuntarily exclaimed:

"Sergeant Moriarty—of the 47th!"

"An' how the divil did ye know me?" inquired the shivering tramp, in equal surprise.

"I should know that hand anywhere," I replied. "But it 's too cold to talk here. Come into yonder saloon, and after you have had food and drink you shall light your pipe and tell me your story."

The tramp followed me, and soon we were seated in a back-room of the saloon—he paying marked attention to a bountiful supply of meat, bread and beer that had been placed before him, while I lighted a cigar and mentally reviewed the events surrounding and succeeding the time when I had first seen this strange creature.

Before the opening of the Suez canal, much of the travel between India and England was by fast sailing ships, which carried large numbers of passengers and small cargoes of merchandise, the passage around the Cape of Good Hope generally consuming about twelve weeks. With other members of my family, I was a passenger on one of these vessels, the *Renown*, taking the ship at Madras, where she touched while sailing down the coast from Calcutta on her way to England. She carried on this voyage about three hundred and fifty souls—fifty cabin passengers, two hundred and fifty members of a hussar regiment and the crew, servants of passengers, etc., making up the number. The two characters who figure principally in this story were Sergeant Michael Moriarty, returning home with a pension after brave services in the sepoy mutiny, and Motee, the Hindoo boy or body-servant of a rich coffee-planter.

"Sergeant Moriarty—of the 47th," as he always introduced himself, the slight pause after the name being an affectation of speech whose significance none of us ever fathomed, had taken passage at Calcutta. He was neither a cabin nor a steerage passenger, but a sort of intermediate. He ate at the second table in the steward's cuddy, and slept in a little recess between the lower tier of cabins, as the staterooms were called, at the stern of the ship. His quiet and somewhat morose bearing was said to be in direct contrast with the sunny spirit of the Irish youth who had come out several years before to do battle for his country. This was attributed by those who knew of his career to the terrible fate which had befallen Moriarty's sweetheart at the hands of sepoy mutineers.

Norah Hennessey, the pretty daughter of a soldier, lived with her parents at one of the smaller cantonments in Northern India, at the opening of the rebellion. One day the few British soldiers at the station were called away by a ruse, and when they returned they found their homes looted, and the defenseless members of their families butchered. The little band cut their way through the gathering hordes of Hindoo fanatics, and finally, after indescribable hardships and sufferings, a few of them reached a larger command of the British army. Moriarty was one of the survivors. Over the mutilated remains of his once beautiful Norah he had sworn that for each year of her young life at least one of her murderers should perish by his hand, and in the months of bloodshed and carnage that followed he had abundant chance to complete and overrun the score of his vengeance.

At the storming of the fortress of Tirulore, where a particularly ferocious body of mutineers was sheltered, the order of "No quarter!" was given. By no one was this injunction more faithfully and cheerfully carried out than by Moriarty, who was among the first to enter the fort after the gates had been blown away with bags of gunpowder. For the thirteenth time, he had driven his bayonet through the heart of a panic-stricken sepoy, when one of the wretches, borne down by the Irishman's impetuous fury, struck at his assailant with his koorie, the hooked blade severing Moriarty's fingers and otherwise mangling his hand, as it grasped the musket. Regardless of his wound, Moriarty fought on until, overcome by loss of blood and the hot East Indian sun, he fell senseless on the field of butchery. A few weeks in the hospital brought him around all right, but the injury to his hand unfitted him for fighting.

The mutiny was soon at an end, however, and in the succeeding scenes of re-establishment of British rule there was plenty of opportunity for employing Moriarty as an aid-de-camp or messenger. As a conciliator, he was not a success. His frame of mind was such that outside of the regular line of his duty, all Hindoos were "haythen divils" to him, and he could not treat them with common courtesy. His brain had evidently been affected by his grief, and his hardships and the improprieties into which his intolerance and hatred led him soon made it necessary to transfer him to Calcutta, where he became an attendant in one of the courts of justice. Change of scene did not have the desired effect on Moriarty, however, and after he had rubbed pig's fat in the face of a Mussulman, and struck a high-caste native with a broom—the latter one of the worst in the Hindoo category of indignities—he was fined in his own court and sentenced to banishment from India.

The impetuous Irish sergeant was fulfilling the latter part of his sentence when I first saw him. During the first few days of the voyage he kept closely to himself, eating his meals in the steward's cuddy and smoking his pipe in out-of-the-way nooks on the quarter-deck. Seasickness may have had something to do with his moroseness, for after a while he became more sociable. A glass of grog and a cheroot would put him in the best of humor, and at such times his ready wit and gift of story-telling always drew around him a group of interested listeners. While possessing a strong aversion to any reference to his life in India, he sometimes forgot its sad side, and branched off into glowing descriptions of the deeds of the 47th. When he told of the storming and massacre at Tirulore, he grew excited, accompanying his narrative with gesture and angry expletive, and usually winding up in this lurid style:

"Not a divil's wan of thim did we l'ave to tell his mither he was dead, an' for full sivinteen did Mike Moriarty's bayonet p'int the way to bloody hell."

The climax was reached as Moriarty smashed his clay-pipe on the deck. Then the tall form would disappear down the companionway, not to be seen again for several days.

Not till we had been at sea a fortnight or more did Moriarty's antipathy for the Hindoo Motee make itself apparent. Then, in an evil moment, the native intruded on the presence of his enemy, while the latter was in one of his darkest moods of melancholy. The boy's master had an upper cabin, and the servant, who was quiet and apparently inoffensive, rarely had occasion to venture into the lower regions where the sergeant held sway. On this unlucky day he was dispatched with the cuddy boy to the after-hold to obtain a basket of wine. The light was uncertain, and in returning the native collided with Moriarty in the passageway. There was a crash of glass, an imprecation and a blow. Then the Hindoo, badly frightened and minus the wine, came flying up the companionway stairs, followed by the thoroughly infuriated Irishman. Had not others interfered the fate of the dusky native would have been unpleasant.

The incident naturally caused a stir, and the crusty old coffee planter complained bitterly of the loss of his wine. Through the intercession of the other passengers, however, Moriarty was let off with a short curtailment of his liberty, and the promise of severer punishment if the offense was repeated.

There were no further outbreaks on the part of the Irish sergeant during the voyage, and he contented himself with muttered imprecations, whenever the object of his hatred came within the range of his vision. Once his eyes blazed, and he was on the point of an explosion as the "carrion-eating Pariah," the term of endearment bestowed on the Hindoo by him, approached too near on the deck, but a friendly Hussar diverted his attention, and the trouble blew over.

It was on the night of April 7, 1864, that the tragedy in which Moriarty was believed to have lost his life occurred. The *Renown* had entered the British Channel and was carefully threading her path through the numerous vessels that filled the great waterway. On all sides twinkled the lanterns of these fire-flies of passage, and far away on the horizon flashed the flame of an occasional light-house. One by one the passengers, happy in the thought that but a day separated them from friends and home, retired to their berths, and soon the decks of the ship were apparently deserted, save by the second mate on duty and the watch. The officer passed the poop-deck, now and then stopping to glance at the binnacle or to give an order to the man at the wheel; the other members of the watch were forward. Drifting beside the ship was a fishing smack, her master and his two mates being down in the pantry receiving pay for a supply of fish and oysters, and exchanging news with the steward over a glass of grog. A mist slowly settled down over the sea, and the second mate whistled for the boatswain, and sent him below to order the fishermen to go on board their sloop and cast off.

Just about this time the officer's attention was attracted by strange sounds like a smothered cry and a heavy fall. The noise ceased, and, as it was not repeated, he concluded that it came from a drunken soldier in the steerage, or more possibly from a group of hussar officers and other passengers, who, in one of the lower cabins, were celebrating with wine and oysters their last night on the ship, the notes of their merry-making being borne to the outer air by the open port-hole of the cabin.

The fishermen, obeying the boatswain's message, left the ship, unfastened their moorings and were soon lost to sight in the fog. The *Renown* ploughed her way slowly through the gloom, the vigilance of the lookout being doubled as the fog thickened. Gradually the songs of the revelers in the lower cabin ceased, and the stillness was only broken by the rattling of a rudder chain, the flapping of a sail or the far-off whistle of a coasting steamer.

And so the night passed on until early morning, when, just as eight bells had struck and the watch was being changed, the half-conscious form of Motee was found among the blocks and coils of rope at the foot of the mainmast. There was a cut on his head and he had bled freely. He cried and talked incoherently, the words "Moriarty doree" being particularly prominent in his rambling jargon. The ship's doctor took him in hand, and when he had recovered full consciousness he told a story of how, when on his way to the caboose about eleven o'clock the night before to get some hot water for his master's night-cap, he had been attacked by Sergeant Moriarty with a "big sword."

"He much drink arrack. He mad, and say he cut damn Pariah dog head up," explained the Hindoo, in garbled English. A broken pitcher on the deck was a partial corroboration of Motee's statement, but his alleged assailant had disappeared.

It was well known that Moriarty, in sharing the good cheer of many friends the previous evening, had become exhilarated. When last seen, he was asleep on a coil of rope, with his shoulders resting against the main-mast. He had resisted all efforts to have him retire below, insisting that he must remain on deck to obtain the first possible glimpse of "ould England."

The discovery of Motee and the story he told led to a thorough search for the missing sergeant, but not a trace of him could be found. In the recess where he slept were his mattress, pillow and blanket, rolled up with a soldier's precision, and left as Moriarty had placed them after using them last. A tin box fastened with a padlock contained his other belongings. When this was opened it revealed, besides articles of clothing and the toilet, several small East Indian curiosities, a page of the *Illustrated London News*, picturing the blowing of mutinous sepoys from the cannon's mouth, and a rusty, scabbardless bayonet, possibly the same one that in the hands of the relentless sergeant had "p'inted the way" to destruction for so many mutineers.

Motee's story was not generally accepted as true. He was large enough and strong enough to have overcome the sergeant in his disabled condition, and not a few believed that the Hindoo, finding his enemy *hors de combat*, had wreaked his revenge on him and thrown the body overboard. It was not impossible that in the slight resistance offered or that by accident Motee might have received the wound on his head, which was evidently the result of contact with a blunt instrument. By nearly all on board, therefore, the Hindoo was regarded as a murderer; but there was nothing but circumstantial evidence against him, and when the ship reached London he was permitted to depart with his master.

After a lapse of nearly a quarter of a century, here was the "murdered man" seated in the same room with me and stowing away substantial victuals in a very unspook-like manner.

Sergeant Moriarty ate ravenously and drank deep draughts of beer. Then he called for a glass of brandy and soda and swallowed that. Declining a cigar that I offered him, he drew a stubby black pipe from his pocket, filled and lighted it, and puffed moodily for a few moments. Gradually his tongue became loosened.

"I 'm very sorry I didn't kill the divil; bad luck to him," said Moriarty, when I told him of Motee's recovery and departure from the ship. "He 's been following me ever since."

Then the soldier-tramp gave me the story of his own escape from the *Renown* and his subsequent wanderings. Condensed in form and robbed of its picturesque verbiage, it is as follows:

Sergeant Moriarty, enjoying his tipsy slumbers at the foot of the main-mast on the ship *Renown*, was rudely awakened by having a ribbon of stout cloth thrown over his head, and receiving a jerk that nearly broke his neck. The cloth, instead of falling around his neck and strangling him as his would-be assassin had intended, caught in his gaping mouth and saved his life, although it served temporarily as a gag. With a superhuman effort Moriarity struggled to his feet and as he put out his hand it fell on a belaying-pin at the side of the mast. Jerking this loose from its rack he struck his assailant over the head and knocked him senseless. Then the Irishman discovered that he had been attacked by Motee, who, finding his enemy unconscious and the deck deserted, had embraced the opportunity for gratifying his revenge.

Believing that he had killed the Hindoo, Moriarty's first impulse was to pitch the body overboard. At this moment he discovered the presence of the fishing-smack, and, as the second mate's whistle calling the boatswain broke the stillness, he passed quickly down the ship's ladder and hid himself in the hold of the smaller vessel, determined, if necessary, to appeal to the generosity of the fishermen. The necessity did not arise, however, for by dawn the smack was moored at her wharf in one of the fishing hamlets on the English coast and deserted by her crew.

Although his clothes and other luggage were left on the *Renown*, Moriarty carried his little hoard of money with him, and it was not long before he was on his way to his friends in Ireland.

Having arrived there, he remained for a dozen years, finding work on farms and in gardens about his native place. Then a spirit of unrest and adventure possessed him, and he shipped as cook on a sailing vessel. From that time he had drifted to all parts of the world, falling deeper in degradation, until he had reached the lowest strata of bummerhood.

Three times, Moriarty insisted, he had seen Motee since that last night on the *Renown*, and twice had the Hindoo tried to take his life. First he had run across Motee in a sailors' boarding-house at Liverpool, where, according to the Irishman, the dusky Hindoo had put poison in his tea, the fortunate discovery of the plot by another sailor alone preventing its consummation. Motee quickly disappeared, to re-appear next at a row in a Havana dive, where Moriarty was badly stabbed. The knife, he assured me, was held by the same dark-skinned avenger.

"The other night," said my guest, with sudden earnestness, bringing his chair forward with a bang, and smashing his pipe on the floor, "the other night I saw the divil down by the wharves. He 's looking for me now. 'It 's three toimes an' out,' ye say over here, an' the third toime, Mike—Sergeant Moriarty—of the 47th will be out."

The fire in the caverns of the soldier-tramp's eyes died away, and his head dropped forward for a moment. Then he rose, gathered up his hat and other coverings, and, as I forced some money into his hand, started to leave the room. Suddenly he stopped, clutched at the door-post and staggered back. Looking through, I saw a dark-hued man, in sailor clothes, drinking at the bar. He was stouter than Motee had been, and a thick beard covered his face, but his features were those of an East Indian. He finished his glass, cast a glance around the room, as if looking for some one, and went out.

I followed, for it was late. Moriarty, when I last saw him, was standing in the doorway of the little room where he had dined.

A day or two later my attention was attracted by an item in an afternoon paper, headed: "Thuggee In The Slums." It described the finding of the body of a tramp in an alley off Baxter street. He had evidently been strangled, said the reporter, after the manner pursued by East Indian Thugs, for a narrow strip of cloth, apparently of foreign woof, was knotted about his neck. The part of the item describing the body and speaking of one of the hands as being badly deformed startled me.

At the morgue I found poor Moriarty's body. Around the neck was a dark blue mark, such as one sees on the necks of persons who have been hanged. There were bruises on his face, as if he had been attacked from behind and pitched forward upon the rough ground. The police surgeon said the man's neck had been broken.

I told the police that I suspected murder, but they pooh-poohed the matter, and made no effort to find the assassin. It was unquestionably a suicide, they said, with their usual astuteness. A clever newspaper reporter, however, discovered that an East Indian sailor answering Motee's description had been in New York for several days before and on the night of Sergeant Moriarty's taking off, and had sailed the following morning on a ship bound for Calcutta. The fellow was not an entire stranger among the sailor boarding-houses of the East-side, it seemed, and had the reputation of being cruel and vindictive, while the propensity which he had shown in drunken affrays to choke the person with whom he was fighting had given him the local nick-name of "The Strangler."

Claiming the body of the old soldier, I had it buried in consecrated ground, a friendly priest reading the burial service. A modest head-stone that rises over the grave bears the inscription:

"SERGEANT MORIARTY—OF THE 47TH."

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TREASURE-TROVE.

BY ELIZABETH L. CARY.

I am an asthmatic old lady, and I went up to Lake Placid to breathe that higher air that always has a good effect on my respiratory system. If one has never been to Lake Placid—well, some call it the Switzerland of America, just as they call the Hudson River and bits of California by European titles meant to be eulogistic. I have never been to Switzerland, but when I go I'll not condescend to it thus, saying: "Thou art beautiful indeed—thou art the Lake Placid of Europe!"

My lovely lake has an individuality all its own, and I know the mountains that embrace it more intimately than I do my next-door neighbors. Neighbors do not count for so much in the city as mountains in the wilderness. So I know them all by name; Marcy and Colburn, and little Cobble Hill, the baby of the group, and Grandfather Whiteface. I know their different moods; their stormy fits of anger when heavy clouds crossed their faces; their noonday smiles; their evening silences. And I think I am getting to be a very old woman indeed, for these reminiscences are making me forget to tell my story. Not so much my story, either, as hers. I have had others shut between the covers of the past, and this one is probably the last of my little life-collection, and it is the beginning of Helen's, the fresh opening chapter of her unread book. It was a case of love at first sight when I saw Helen. Mac, the guide, had rowed me up the lake almost to the foot of Whiteface, when I saw a landing that I had not noticed before. I asked him the name, and he answered, briefly:

"Painter's Camp."

I supposed it meant a camp of young Bohemians half playing, half working among the glory of the hills; and remembering my visits to the academy and art association, I thought impatiently of how little they would carry back to suggest the daily splendor and calm about them.

I said something of feeling this. One learns to talk to the guides much as one might to the hills or the trees of the forest. But this time Mac responded:

"Lord! Don't you know it's a gal? Her paint-work is mighty pretty."

As soon as I knew it was a "gal," I wanted to land, and when Mac had run the boat up on the floating boards, I made my way to the rough little house with a full assurance of being welcome. Visitors are too rare in that region to be treated with indifference; and the vivid recollection of the lonely winter does not have time to melt away during the short summer months.

The door stood open, and it was then and there that I first saw my treasure. She was very fair to look upon. Her hair was bright, and her eyes had a soft, shy dreaminess in them. It was the "artistic temperament" shorn of its makeshifts and apologies and selfishnesses. Here in the forest primeval was the dawning of art, the birth of the creative spirit. While daily tasks went on between sunrise and sunset, the intervals were filled with a patient endeavor to translate her deep appreciation in feeble terms of color. Of course, I learned all this later. When I went in and asked to see some of the artist's work, she took me to a little table spread with strips of birch bark, academy board and small canvases. I had thought, as I said, impatiently, of the bold daubs that the Bohemians of my fancy would carry back to the city, but these paintings were too bad to inspire resentment. There was love in every line—and O, so many lines—patient dots and specks of color, faithful outline representation of the mountains, bumps and hollows, a confusion of reflections in the thick painty water. The pity of it struck to my heart through my irresistible amusement. She had seen it all—had loved it all—and, mockery of mockeries, had tried to paint it all!

"I took lessons in Plattsburgh—I lived in Plattsburgh. I took six lessons. The lady —my teacher—told me never to try to paint nature. It was much better to copy colored plates. But this place is so beautiful, I couldn't help trying a little, and now I do it all the time."

She seemed to be emboldened by my interest, and went on to say that she sometimes took her studies down to the hotels, where she occasionally sold several.

"Enough to buy paints and things. So it sort of pays for itself, you see," she urged, apologetically. "Sometimes I think the boarders don't much want them. I don't like that; but they've no need to buy them if they don't. Are they very bad?"

She asked the question abruptly, looking full into my eyes with her own sober blue ones. I gathered my conscience together. I thought of Mr. Howells's story of "The Minister's Charge," and the poor boy whose poetry was praised to his undoing. I thought, too, in a vague way, of the golden rule, and in that moment of hesitation formed a wild plan, such as only rich old maids have a right to build in a hurry—a real air-castle that, nevertheless, money and good will could set on a firm foundation. Years had taught me a little discretion, though—a very little; so I contented myself for the time with telling her that a great deal in the work was very bad and a little was good. Her sweet eagerness to learn the whys and wherefores of my criticisms won me more and more, and by the time I rowed back to my hotel, the first story of my air-castle was a marvel of architecture. I learned that the girl, Helen Dayton, was an orphan, and poor, of course. There is a sad certainty about the poverty of the people corresponding with the poverty of the soil up there in the north country. She lived with an aunt, who had the mighty pride of ignorance in her niece's genius, and—well, I am not quite in my dotage, so I didn't try to do it all in a moment; but I formed the habit of rowing daily up to Painter's Camp, and I used to take Helen out sketching, and helped her a little with my advice, and gave her judicious bits of information regarding the wide world of art, as to which, Heaven knows, I am ignorant enough; but it stirred her enthusiasm, and all the time that I delighted in the beauty of her animated young face, in the flushes and lights and shades, and in the lovely, trustful eyes, I remembered my responsibility and dwelt on the hardships, the toil and tedium and the infinite disappointments of an artist's life. But I might as well have held my peace about them, except for the satisfaction it gave to my self-esteem, for, bless you, it had no effect on her. She spread her hard, coarse little hands in front of her and said:

"I shouldn't mind; I shouldn't mind that. I am used to work—horrid, common work that I hate, and the other would be work to an *end*—work that I should love."

I told her it wasn't quite that; the end would never come. It was a flying goal, and she would get very tired and disgusted with it all.

But my matter-of-fact enlargement of the topic was of no use. I racked my brains for all my scraps of knowledge in order to present the most unattractive details of the *atelier* to her thirsty young mind. It didn't work at all, and in my heart I murmured a prayer of thanks, for I had done my duty of discouragement and felt free at the close of the summer to suggest taking Helen back with me to New York to study art. Of course, it made a great commotion—there were more bears in the way than there were in the woods, a great many more; but after a while I carried my point and Helen sat by my side on the jolting train with that queer country mixture of dignity and excitement in her face and manner. My feeling toward my treasure was a very composite one. I had grown to love her very much, indeed, during our summer wanderings; but, aside from this, the evolution of my experiment interested me, and, too, there was a little natural sentiment about having this young fair girl grateful to me with all her heart and soul, for what, as yet, she knew nothing of, alas!

As an artist, she might be a miserable failure, but I kept that thought in the background and stilled its warning with the consciousness that I could offer her plenty of compensations in the great life of the city, should her gleaming bubble burst.

I watched her quivering lip as we caught the last glimpse of the lake region from the window, and quoted, softly:

> "There are gains for all our losses,
> There is balm for all our pain."

Why should I stop there? Ah! well, the rest was for me, alone. Time would teach her soon enough that—

> "When youth, the dream, departs,
> It takes something from our hearts
> That will never come again."

Was the experiment a success? Why do you suppose I am straining my old eyes over the notice of the Spring Salon? Helen studied hard; there was plenty of push behind those dreamy eyes. I sha'n't forget the first picture she sent to the Academy. She chose "Farewell, Summer," for the title. I thought it was too sentimental, and told her so, and I didn't believe she would succeed with a subject so near her heart as that dimpling lake among those grand old hills. I told her that, too. But Helen has a good deal of will, the kind that hides behind the soft vagueness of the artistic temperament. She went up North to make her studies, and came back and painted her picture, and painted it well, too. There were both skill and feeling in that girl in a boat, and the mountain-sides growing warm with color, and the occasional skeletons of dead trees flinging their gaunt arms to heaven. Nothing very true, but she put heart and mind to it, and both made themselves felt. The committee hung it on the line, and that settled a plan we had held in abeyance. In the fall, Helen sailed with my old friend Mrs. Worthington, and her two daughters, both art students. She went into the Julien *atelier*, and her letters are full of its art life. I shall join her in a few weeks. I couldn't go before, and I didn't want to keep her. She's young, and youth and art fill the heart pretty full. Yes, of course, she loves me. I gave her her heart's desire, and she—well, she is mine, my treasure-trove. Here's the report of her *salon* picture, "Les Amis;" I see it has "*mention honorable*."

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MY BABY.

BY ANNIE RUSSELL.

For thy dear sake, my little one,
I stifle many a bitter sigh,
For thy sweet life I count it gain
My cherished wishes to deny.

Oh sacred trust, my baby fair,
How can I count thy worth to me;
Salvation for my erring soul
In thy clear eyes I daily see.

Dear little arms that cling and twine
Around thy mother's lonely heart;
Dear little hands laid in my own,
God grant that we may never part.

Sweet little voice, and broken words
More eloquent than songs of love,
A spell is in thy lowest tones,
That lifts me into realms above.

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AN ADVENTURE IN LUCKNOW.

A thrilling experience in Lucknow is thus given:

One morning I was driving with a friend of mine, in a little open gig, from the river Goomtee to one of the king's palaces in Lucknow. To our profound astonishment we found the streets of Lucknow as empty as if a pestilence had swept them. It suddenly broke on me that this solitude must be some dreadful nightmare; it seemed uncanny to find no single soul in the street that always before had been full of bustle and motion.

I looked up to the deserted houses to right and left of us as we passed, and presently spied a solitary figure standing on a house-top. It was one of the king's troopers. His hand was up shading his eyes, and the fellow was gazing intently up the street.

"What is the matter?" I shouted up to him, pulling up the mare again.

The trooper dropped his hand, looked down on us and said:

"The man-eater is loose, 'wallah!' Look out, sahibs; he is quite wild to-day."

I had heard of a savage horse belonging to one of the troopers, and of this nickname of "Kunewallah," or the man-eater, which had been given to him because he had destroyed many men. So I hesitated for a moment, and was about to ask the man on the house-top which direction the beast had taken, when the fellow suddenly started and yelled down to us:

"He is coming! He is coming! Take care, sahibs—take care!"

His voice rose to a shrill scream. Following his gaze, I saw, far up the road, this wild brute of a large bay horse savagely shaking a white bundle in his mouth. The bundle was an unhappy native child that he had seized by the shirt, and the beast was evidently coming our way. In another moment, he caught sight of the carriage, dropped the child in the dust, and rushed forward furiously to attack us. I cannot tell how I turned the gig, for the mare was very nearly unmanageable with terror. But I must have got her round in less time than it takes to write this sentence; and an instant after, we were tearing at a mad gallop back along the road. We could hear the iron hoofs of the man-eater clattering over the road between the lines of silent houses, as he pursued us at break-neck speed. I flung one look over my shoulder, measuring the distance. There was no hope for us except to make straight for a sort of yard a short way ahead of us. Ordinarily this was closed with strong gates, but I saw a streak of light between them sufficiently broad to make me believe that in this instance they stood ajar, and that the bolts were not up. Providentially, this was the case. We drove up to the inclosure, where I leaped out of the gig, and flung myself against the gate. It fell back. I caught my mare by the bit, and dragged my friend into safety. The doors slammed to behind the gig, and shut with a crash, as a heavy iron bolt fell into its socket. We were just in time.

As the bolt fell in, the man-eater came thundering up, his head and cheeks covered with blood, his jaws streaming with the recent slaughter of his victims. He stood looking savagely through the rails, with cocked ears, distended nostrils and glaring eye-balls—a ferocious-looking monster. Our mare was trembling from head to foot as if shivering with cold, though the sweat was really streaming off her coat. The man-eater glared for some time through the bars, then began to walk round and round to try to find an opening. But it was all hard iron railing. Satisfied that he was baffled, he turned round, rattled his iron heels against the bars, and with head and tail erect and cocked ears, galloped off down the road.

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THE BLUE DANUBE.

Among the most important rivers in Europe is the Danube; in fact, it is the second river. It has a length of one thousand seven hundred miles; it and its tributaries drain a valley having an area of over three hundred thousand square miles. Many nations live along its banks and those of the rivers which flow into it, and nearly thirty dialects are spoken from its source to its mouth. It rises in the Black Forest to the north of Switzerland, and almost in sight of the French frontier. Through Bavaria and Austria is its course, through Hungary, past Servia and Bulgaria, Roumania and Roumelia, while tributaries flow in from Bosnia and Macedonia on the south and Poland on the north, so that practically the valley of the Danube comprises the most important portion of Eastern Europe. It runs through the battle-ground of civilization and savagery. Here the Romans contended with the Scythians and the Huns; here the Greek empire strove to maintain its supremacy over the hordes of savage tribes which came down from the steppes of Russia; here, after the empire of the East faded away, Charlemagne contended with savage tribes of semi-Asiatics; here all Europe fought the Turks for generation after generation, until by a great battle fought under the walls of Vienna, the flood of the Mohammedan invasion was rolled back toward Asia.

◆

A WONDERFUL MEMORY.

The following anecdote of Mozart shows that he must have been a born musician:

"When fourteen years old he heard in Rome the Miserere of Allegri; and knowing that it was forbidden to take or give a copy of this famous piece, he paid such attention to the music that when he reached home he noted down the entire piece. He was enabled a few days afterward to check the copy, when he found that he had not made a single mistake. The next day he produced such a sensation in Rome by singing the Miserere at a concert, that Pope Clement XIV. requested that he should be presented to him. Thus, by his wonderful memory, he was enabled to begin with success his musical career."

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ANECDOTE OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

Michael Angelo, at a time when Italy paid so much attention to ancient art that modern had no chance of being judged fairly, had, it is said, resort to a stratagem to teach the critics the fallacy of shaping their judgments by fashion or reputation. He sculptured a statue representing a sleeping beauty, and breaking off an arm, buried it in a place where excavations were being made. It was soon found, and lauded by critics and the public as a valuable relic of antiquity, far superior to anything done for centuries. When Angelo thought it had gone far enough he produced the broken arm, and, to the great mortification of the critics, revealed himself as the sculptor.

TWENTY MINUTES WITH YOUR HAND.

BY D. D. BIDWELL.

In the days when the Directoire and the Empire gowns held their first reign, our grandmothers found opportunities before they had rounded their 'teens to consult secretly a gipsy fortune teller, and, after crossing her palm with good American silver, they would scrutinize their own pink palms while flattering futures were being revealed. Then they would trip back home with pretended indifference to tell Dorothy, Martha, Polly, Jerushy and Mehitabel "how silly it all was," and would forthwith resume knitting stomachers, or go to great-grandmamma to read aloud from "Baxter's Saints' Rest," or draw a jug of hard cider for great-grandpapa.

It is in order to smile at our grandmothers. But it is also in order to remember that credulity is in the human blood. Back in the unplaced time when blind Homer roamed the Hellenic lands, palmistry was almost a tenet in the Hellenic religion. Through classic times there was a firm popular belief in it. During the middle ages, belief in it was equally strong, and many treatises on the science were written in the choicest of mediæval Latin. A century ago, even, there were thousands not to be classed with the ignorant who believed that most of the important events in a man's life could be foretold by an experienced palmist. By this time, palmistry has taken its proper place as a fanciful amusement which can teach a quick and logical observer interesting physiological facts concerning the hand, from which facts certain mental and moral qualities may be expected to be a part of the "subject's" character.

It is conceded by all that no two pairs of hands are exactly alike. It is also conceded that a hand may indicate strength or weakness, beauty or plainness, sensibility or brutality, and vigorous or poor health. It is furthermore conceded that the hands of artists and musicians commonly have long and flexible fingers, while the fingers of artisans and farmers are shorter and thicker. A muscular hand, with a vigorous grip, with few short lines, with the lines prominent, belongs as evidently to a healthy subject as does a flabby, skinny hand, with a feeble grip, with numerous short, pale lines, to a nervous subject.

As far as the fingers are concerned, experts in palmistry divide hands into three classes. Long, slender, tapering fingers determine the first, and denote delicate, trained perceptions. A subject with such fingers has an innate fondness for art, poetry, music and the higher forms of literature. In the second class, the fingers are shorter, are nearly equal in length, and have blunt ends. They denote a practical, material mind, thorough and reliable, rather than brilliant. A woman with such fingers would make a careful and efficient housekeeper, and a man with similar ones would be cautious and thorough in business. In the third class, the fingers are short, thick and square, and have short, large nails, with cushions on each side of the nails. A subject having these fingers is active, athletic, opinionated, selfish, has strong appetites for the material things of life, and is liable to form strong prejudices.

After forming a general impression of the palm and fingers, an expert observes in detail first the lines of the hand, then the "uprises," and finally the joints.

There are three prominent lines in the palm: the line of life, that of the head, and the heart line.

The line of life begins on the inner boundary of the palm, about midway between the thumb and the forefinger. If we imagine the left hand to be a map, with the fingers pointing north, this line runs toward the southeast, then curves toward the south, and in some hands curves finally toward the southwest. It thus skirts the base or "uprise" of the thumb, known as the uprise of Venus. If it is deep, broad, of good color, and extends nearly or quite to the wrist, and if the rest of the hand indicates vitality and cheerfulness, the subject may be expected to live to a green old age; he has a good disposition, and the qualities which good health and good temper usually create.

Palmists read mainly from the left hand. Such palmists as wish to dazzle with glittering details occasionally speculate regarding the length of a subject's life. Supposing the distance from the line's origin to the inner base of the thumb to represent three-score-years-and-ten, they compare the line's length with this distance; thus, if the line covers half the distance, the subject is allowed thirty-five years of mundane existence.

The line of the head also begins about midway between the forefinger and the thumb. If it is joined at the beginning with the line of life we are expected to believe, according to the rubrics of the science, that the subject's head governs his life; and, if furthermore, it extends well into the hollow of the hand it indicates coolness, resolution, good judgment and shrewdness. If it extends nearly across the hand it shows miserliness, except it slopes abruptly toward the lower outer edge of the palm, in which case it indicates a tendency toward insanity.

The line of the heart rises at the outer edge of the palm and commonly about an inch below the root of the little finger. It is the most variable of the linear trio. It usually extends in a direction nearly parallel to the upper edge of the palm, but frequently slopes upward or downward. Sometimes it is made up of capricious, jerky zig-zags. It may terminate under any of the four fingers or it may run into the line of the head. If the line is plain, single, red and continuous, it prophesies strong and wholesome domestic affection. But if, as we expect to find in the feminine hand, it is broad, pale and spotty and ornamented with little trimmings and deviations, it indicates caprice and flirtatious adventure. If the line is made up of jerks it indicates extreme inconstancy as well as vanity and flabby emotion. If the line is broken under the little finger it indicates a misfortune in love, arising (the misfortune) from the subject's fondness for gayety; if broken under the third finger, a love misfortune arising from fondness for art or music or literature; under the second finger, from devotion to religion; under the first, from pride and ambition.

Two minor lines, that of Saturn and the hepatic line, are found in most hands. Saturn runs from the base of the second finger to the hollow of the palm, and often nearly to the wrist. In the latter case it presages good fortune on general principles; in the former case, hard luck arising from the heart. The hepatic line should connect the base of the life line with either the head line or the heart line; when it is firm and plain it shows good health and a good memory; when it is tortuous it denotes biliousness and irritability; when pale and thin, declining health.

After reading the lines, the professor examines the various areas into which the science divides the palm. These areas are seven in number, and are termed the "uprises" of Jupiter, Saturn, Apollo and Mercury, the plane of Mars, the area of Diana and the uprise of Venus.

As for the uprise of Jupiter: This, the First Class in Jography would explain, is bounded on the north by the first finger, on the east by the base of the second finger, on the south by the beginning of the head line, and on the west by space and chaos. As the first finger is used in pointing, direction, indication, it has from classical times been called the index finger. The Romans regarded it as the fore, or foremost, finger, and consequently regarded it as representative of Jupiter. If the uprise at its base is prominent and muscular, or if it is graven with sharp lines, the professor, if he has tact, speaks in this wise to the subject:

"You are energetic and confident and have fine executive capacity; in business you could manage vast enterprises; in politics you would find yourself among the party leaders, and would be a political general rather than a political student; in ordinary life you would be chosen as a social leader and manager."

But if the professor lacks tact he speaks in this wise:

"You are energetic, confident, masterful, domineering and imperious. You would be successful as long as you did not antagonize too overbearingly. Your methods are theoretically brilliant, but offensive in practice. You are better adapted for a military career than for business or politics or a profession or social life."

If the uprise is small and flabby, and either without lines or with pale and weak ones, the opposite qualities to those just mentioned are read. The outer half of the area is supposed to indicate conceit and display, and the inner, pride and ambition.

The second of the seven areas is known as the uprise of Saturn and is at the base of the second finger. A large elevation and heavy lines here indicate superstition, fanaticism, sadness and romanticism. A depression and no lines, or faint ones, signify misfortune and a tendency toward murder; if the depression is unusually deep in a female subject, and if Mars (to be described later) is unusually prominent, the subject, Romany princesses expound, has a temper like a cyclone.

At the base of the third finger is the uprise of Apollo, the god of light and the fine arts. Prominence here denotes the finer forms of sympathetic intelligence; love for art, music and literature, and a desire to discover and feel the beautiful in life. Excess denotes æsthetic crankiness. A depression without lines denotes vulgarity and low appetites.

The fourth area is Mercury and is at the base of the little finger. Prominence represents activity, wit and tact. The maiden with Mercury prominent learns palmistry, holding that when she has taken her degree her hand shall be against every man's and every man's hand against hers. Every wise man holds this. Excess betokens dexterity, deception and an undue fondness for excitement, gayety and all kinds of commotion and bustle (wire or paper). It so signifies because *aleus Mercurivs*, the wing-footed messenger of the gods, wore bustles on his ankles. A depression means depression.

The plane of Mars is at the outer edge of the palm. Its northern boundary is the heart-line; its eastern, space; its southern, the uprise of Diana; its western, the hollow of the hand. Prominence evidences courage, tenacity and self-control. Excess evidences violence, destructiveness and recklessness of the Ajax or Roland or Murat types. A depression indicates cowardice. Prominence in Mars in the hand feminine indicates a fondness for pets—not excluding human pets.

Below Mars and at the extreme southeastern corner of the palm is Diana. Diana is the seat of romance, poetry, fancy, sentiment and imagination. Excess indicates sentimentality, æstheticism, caprice and tendency toward insanity. Depression indicates hard-headed common sense and ultra-materialism.

The large elevation at the base of the thumb is the uprise of Venus. It is the seat of grace, beauty, affection, melody and courtesy. Excess indicates display, vanity and sensuality. Lines radiating from it to the line of life indicate evils rising from uncontrolled affection. A slight and flabby uprise indicates selfishness.

Having read the palm, we request the subject to clinch her—or his—fist. As the fingers close, the outer edge of Mercury shows two deep creases, one the beginning of the heart-line, the other separating the little finger from the cushion padding the base of the finger. These two lines are the bounds of matrimonial time. A line between them represents a spouse, and each additional one an additional spouse. Absence of lines represents a futurity of spouselessness. From the character of lines within the bounds of connubial time, the constructive mind can evolve gorgeous conjugal futures.

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PLENTY OF SLEEP.

It is all very well to commend getting up early in the morning. It would be difficult to exaggerate either the pleasures or the advantages afforded by early rising. But to rise early one must retire early.

A plenty of sleep is one of the first requisites of health. Fevers and other diseases are often occasioned by excessive fatigue. A person should sleep enough to get thoroughly rested. For some cause, sleep in the early part of the night seems to be more refreshing than sleep for the same number of hours toward morning.

Unfortunately modern social habits are tending to reverse the order of nature, turning day into night, and night into day. This is very destructive to the beauty as well as the health of our American girls.

It has been recommended that when a lady is going to attend a late party—and they are all late nowadays—she should sleep several hours the day previous. It is asserted that the marvelous beauty of some of the middle-aged women of England has been preserved amid all the dissipations of fashionable society in this way.

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WHAT A STAGE DRESS COSTS.

Parisian actresses go to a very great extreme in the way of costume. Many of them have to receive immense salaries simply on account of the length of their dressmakers' bills. The sum of $6,000, which Mlle. Marie Magnier, of the Théâtre Gymnase, Paris, receives annually is insufficient. Her toilets alone cost nearly $5,000 a year. In Halèvy's comedy "L'Abbé Constantin," she wore a beautiful dress of exceedingly delicate white lace and gold, costing $1,500. Mlle. Jeanne Granier receives $100 a night to play "La Fille â Cacolet" at the Varieties. Nearly two-thirds of her salary goes in dress. The dresses which Mme. Doche wore in the title *rôle* of "La Dame aux Camêllias" cost $600. The costumes now worn by Mme. Sara Bernhardt in the same play will sell for ten times that sum.

FROM THE WORLD'S FOUR CORNERS.

BY HELEN MARSHALL NORTH.

American sewing girls in New York are gradually being driven from their places in the clothing-shops by Russian, Polish and Hungarian women, who gladly work seven days in every week, and ten hours a day, for four dollars, which American girls are not willing to do. In the large suit, cloak, feather and flower factories, thousands of little girls and young women begin work for one dollar a week, their wages increasing at the rate of seventy-five cents a year. After ten years' service some are earning six dollars a week—the average being only three dollars and seventy cents.

A new English game is called "The Bobbies and the Burglar." It is played on a checker-board with seven pieces; six bobbies and one droll little burglar. The burglar is placed on the middle square, and the moves are all directed toward him. Each piece has its own move, and the game consists in the capture of the burglar by the six bobbies in twelve moves. If at the end of the twelfth move the burglar has still a way of escape, the person who manages his moves has won the game.

A striking instance of the effect of trifles oft repeated is seen in a recent statement that a large quantity of the metal on the foot of the famous statue of St. Peter at the Vatican has been worn away by the frequent kisses of votaries. In order to prevent similar injury, the foot of a statue of the Saviour in the Minerva has been protected by a brass buskin, while the face of a bronze statue of the Saviour has been quite kissed away in the course of years.

A school of opera has recently been established by the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, in New York, which is to be under the leadership of Mr. Jesse Williams. The object of the organization is to provide systematic instruction in all points necessary to a thorough training for the operatic stage, and includes the study of dancing, fencing, rehearsals, pantomime, elocution, costuming, general make-up, and, of course, full instruction in voice culture.

Admirers of Dickens will be interested to know that Pyrcroft House in Chertsey, an old-fashioned homestead and the original of the burglars' house celebrated in "Oliver Twist," is still to be seen, with scarcely an alteration since it served as a model for the great novelist. The window is still pointed out, through which Bill Sykes dropped Oliver to open the fastenings and admit the burglars.

A Parisian fad is the wearing of top-boots by society belles when driving in phaetons or other high-seated carriages. The boots are made of the softest possible patent-leather, or else of morocco with kid tops, which are richly embroidered in silks. They have either high or low heels, and the fashion was brought from Spain into France, whence it will doubtless extend into this country.

An exchange says that Joaquin Miller grows more eccentric than ever as he gets older. He lives the life of a hermit, "loafing and inviting his soul" as Walt Whitman puts it, on his ranch near Oakland, Cal. There are three cottages on the ranch, one of which is devoted to his wife and her children, the second to his mother, while the poet occupies the third and seldom seeks society of any sort.

The pencil drawings and water-color work of Charlotte Bronté, with specimens of her needlework and some articles of her dress, are now being exhibited with other relics of the Bronté family, at Thornton, near Bradford, England. The relics are owned by a gentleman of Haworth, who has opened a museum in that place, where these articles may be seen in future by curious travellers.

To make choice cocoanut caramels, that will melt in your mouth and rival the products of the highest priced confectionery, take three pounds of white sugar, one pint of milk, one tablespoonful of butter, one grated cocoanut, two teaspoonfuls of extract of lemon. Boil slowly until stiff, then pour in buttered pans and mark in squares.

Embroidery in silk, ribbon and gold thread is seen on nearly every article designed for home or personal decoration. A pretty young girl at a recent ball wore a dress of tulle with dainty embroidery in blue ribbon in forget-me-nots. Her white satin slippers were also covered with blue ribbon embroidery of the same dainty flowers.

To make frosted chestnuts for a winter-evening confection, roast the nuts, shell them, and then dip them in the beaten white of eggs. Roll them in powdered sugar, and let them dry on an inverted sieve in the oven, which should be moderrately heated. Almonds and walnuts may be frosted in the same way.

Two little misses of three and five, perhaps, made a pretty picture on the Avenue, recently, in their quaint, long cloaks of heliotrope-faced cloth, with velvet sleeves of the same shade, great, flapping heliotrope felt hats, with trimmings of heliotrope feathers and dainty white fur collars and muffs.

The log-book of the renowned Captain Cook, containing an account of his voyages in the ship *Endeavor*, from 1768 to 1771, in the captain's own handwriting, was recently found in a bookseller's shop in London, and is now on exhibition in the New South Wales Court of the Crystal Palace.

The "Angelus" was sold by its painter for £72; gained something each time it changed owners, and having been sold about a dozen times was last purchased by M. Chauchard for £30,000.

A Circulating Picture Loan Society, on the principle of a circulating library for books, is to be established in London. An annual fee entitles subscribers to the loan of one or more pictures by noted artists, and these are changed every few months, according to the subscriber's taste and his fee.

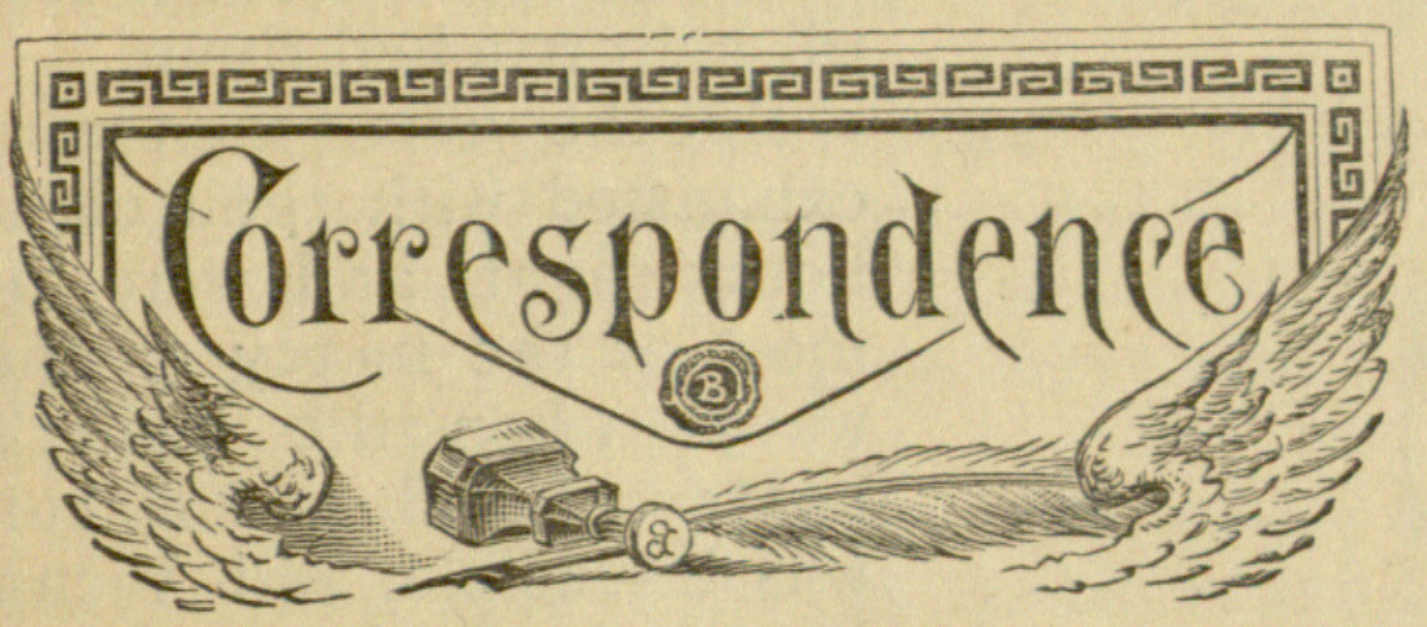
A magnificent organ has lately been erected by the Duke of Sutherland, in the grand hall at Stafford House. The propelling power is an hydraulic engine, and the cost of the instrument was six thousand pounds. The duke is an ardent lover of music and is a performer of good ability.

A handsome chief of modern brigands, in Greece, is Anastasius, a cultivated Greek of courtly manners. He speaks four languages, and spends his time in kidnaping inoffensive travellers, whom he detains on scanty fare until he receives a generous ransom.

Mrs. Fletcher, who lately died in Gloucester at the age of eighty-one, had spent thirty-two successful years of her life in superintending a gun factory of which she was owner.

Evening bodices are now often cut at the neck in the square, pompadour shape which was so popular for many years, but which has hardly been seen of late.

Miss Ellen Terry, the actress, is president of the Ladies' Cycling Club of London.



Correspondence

Lapis (Nobscot, Mass.) writes: "Will you give me a list of the different stones for the months of the year?" *Answer:* The ancients attributed marvelous properties to many of the precious stones, and particular gems have been marked by their own distinguishing fables. The same notions have continued down more or less to times not long past. Below in tabular form are the different months and the stones sacred to them, with their respective legendary meaning. It has been customary among lovers and friends to notice the significance attached to the various stones in making birthday, engagement and wedding presents. Here is the table: *January*—Garnet; constancy and fidelity in every engagement. *February*—Amethyst; preventive against violent passions. *March*—Bloodstone; courage, wisdom and firmness in affection. *April*—Sapphire; frees from enchantment; denotes repentance. *May*—Emerald; discovers false friends; insures true love; denotes meekness. *June*—Agate; insures long life, health and prosperity. *July*—Ruby; discovers poison; corrects evils resulting from mistaken friendship. *August*—Sardonyx insures conjugal felicity. *September*—Chrysolite; frees from evil passions and sadness of the mind. *October*—Opal; denotes hope, and sharpens the sight and faith of the possessor. *November*—Topaz; fidelity and friendship; prevents bad dreams. *December*—Turquois; prosperity in love. Other precious stones possessing magical powers are: *Moonstone*—Protects from harm and danger. *Carnelian*—Possesses the power of healing. *Diamond*—Faith, innocence, virginity. *Turquois*—This stone was much used by the ancients as a love-gift. When the lover or friend became unfaithful the gem lost its luster and turned dark. *Heliotrope*—Causes the wearer to walk invisible. *Pearl*—Purity, strength; gives clearness to physical and mental sight. *Coral*—Protects little children from infantile diseases; hence mothers clasp necklaces of coral about the children's throats, a practice still general among the Italian peasantry. *Agate*—Gives beautiful dreams. *Cat's-eye*—Possesses the virtue of enriching the wearer.

Brooklyn writes: "Will the *Ledger* give the story of Theseus and Ariadne?" *Answer:* According to Homer, Ariadne was the daughter of Minos, King of Crete. Minos had a pet animal with the body of a man and the head of a bull, which he named the "minotaur," and which he kept concealed in a labyrinth. Having made successful war on Athens he compelled that city to send a periodical tribute of seven youths and seven virgins as confectionery for the minotaur. Eventually, Theseus, a legendary Athenian hero, volunteered to serve as one of the seven youths. On his arrival at Crete he won the affections of Ariadne, who furnished him with a magic sword and a clew of thread. With the first he killed the minotaur, and, with the second, by rewinding it upon a stick as he walked, he found his way out of the labyrinth. To show his gratitude to Ariadne, he thereupon carried her off, but not finding her to be all that fancy had pictured, he dropped her at the island of Naxos, where she was killed by the arrows of Diana. According to another account, she sought, after landing at Naxos, consolation from Bacchus, who married her, and after her death transferred to the sky the crown of golden stars which he gave her at the wedding.

J. C. W. writes: "Who was the eldest son of Lafayette?" *Answer:* He was named George Washington Lafayette. He was an infant during the Revolutionary War, but, in his early youth, when his father was overwhelmed in the French Revolution, he came to the United States, and was entertained by General Washington. He also accompanied the marquis on his triumphal return to America, in 1824. He died at Lagrange, in France, January 6, 1856.

S. E. M.—It is rather hurrying matters for a boy of twenty and a child of fourteen to enter into a marriage engagement; but if their parents approve of the match and the engagement, it is a matter in which neighbors have no business to meddle; but it is also a matter about which neighbors will be certain to gossip, and it would be useless to attempt to stop their gossiping.

Incognito.—Marriage is a "contract" which cannot be repudiated by a minor. In the case referred to, you say that the wife, when a girl, being an orphan, had guardians with whom she was living, who opposed her marriage, and have never yet given their assent to it; and that the wife, having become entirely dissatisfied with her marriage relations, now wishes to repudiate, and has been advised that she can legally repudiate her marital obligations when she becomes twenty-one years old, because she was a minor when she entered into them. In this, the lady and her friends are mistaken. The only way in which she can get rid of her marriage bonds is by divorce, which can only be had on sufficient cause therefor being proved.

Inquirer (Mackinaw, Ill.) writes: "Will you please inform me whether the graphophone (the name of the phonograph used in commerce) is being used to any great extent in offices, to the exclusion of stenographers, in the Eastern cities? Do you know whether the machine talks plainly or not? I am a stenographer, and am interested in knowing." *Answer:* The graphophone is not as yet used to any large extent in offices, though its use is increasing. Most stenographers claim that it is inferior in utility to stenography, on the ground that a machine is not as flexible and useful as a man. A good graphophone, or phonograph, reproduces with considerable accuracy peculiarities of accent and intonation.

L. G.—When a lady calls at a friend's where a gentleman happens to be visiting, it is not proper for him to accost the lady thus calling, before she has had time to exchange salutations with the mistress of the house, when the family are all assembled in the sitting-room, as in the case to which you refer. If the gentleman should be alone in the sitting-room when the lady entered it, it would then be proper, if he knew her, to speak to her; but it would be indecorous for him to thrust himself forward when there were members of the family, including the lady of the house, in the room. There is nothing like reticence and modesty in such cases.

Bobstay.—Experimental scientists and philosophers claim that an empty bottle tightly corked, after having been sunk to a great depth in the sea, will, on being drawn to the surface, be found to be filled with water. The fact that you have been a sailor several years, and have never seen such a thing done, and do not believe it could be done, does not make any difference. The experiment has been tried, and the facts are stated in the ordinary school-books from which natural philosophy is taught. Perhaps, if you should try the experiment yourself some time while at sea, your incredulity would be corrected by the results.

Accomack.—Major André was born in England, but his father was a native of Switzerland, and carried on business as a merchant at Geneva. The lady to whom Major André was so tenderly attached was named Honoria Sneyd—she afterward married Mr. Edgeworth. The bones of Major André were disinterred in 1821, taken to England, and buried in Westminster Abbey, where a small monument was erected to his memory. The name is pronounced "An-dray," and must be written with an accent over the final letter, thus, "André."

Boy.—This young gentleman asks how it came to pass that New York has a Latin name, *Novum Eboracum*, though it did not exist when Latin was spoken. Eboracum was the name given by the Romans who conquered Britain, to the city which is now called York. It was a place of renown even at that early day, for two Roman emperors held their court there, and there Constantine the Great was born. New York being named after this ancient Roman city, is called in Latin Novum Eboracum.

L. H.—It may be "perfectly proper for a young lady to visit the parents of a young man to whom she is engaged," and it might be highly improper for her to do so. The propriety or impropriety of her visit would depend on all the circumstances of the case. A young lady should be careful not to be too free in such visits, and she should never make them in a manner, nor under circumstances, which would suggest or raise the question of propriety.

Inquirer.—The word "Coliseum," which was the name of the great amphitheatre of Vespasian at Rome, is pronounced "*Kol*-e-*see*-um," with the accent on the first and third syllables. It is also spelled "Colosseum," and is then pronounced "*Kol*-os-*see*-um." It is never pronounced "Co-*los*-se-um," nor "Co-*losh*-e-um," nor "Co-*losh*-yum" by any one who understands such matters. "Lyceum" is pronounced "ly-*see*-um," and "museum," "mu-*see*-um."

Ricardo.—An English peer of the realm cannot hold a seat in the House of Commons. But numerous persons in Great Britain are styled lords who are not peers, and, therefore, not entitled to seats in the House of Lords. The eldest sons of dukes, marquises and earls are called lords by courtesy, and there are certain Irish and Scotch peers who are not peers of the realm.

Adolescens.—We think that your parents acted justifiably in preventing your marriage. A boy of twenty would be almost certain to make a fool of himself in such a case. It will be time enough for you to think of marrying half a dozen years hence. Shakespeare, who is considered good authority on almost every question, says:

> "A *young* man married is a young man marred."

Civis.—The last executions for witchcraft of which we can find any record occurred in Poland, January 17th, 1775, when nine old women were burned at the stake. They were accused of bewitching the land and rendering it unfruitful.

Subscriber (San Francisco, Cal.).—"Edda's Birthright," by Mrs. Harriet Lewis, has been published in book form by Robert Bonner's Sons, and may be obtained of this office at fifty cents per copy, bound in paper.

Annie.—The name "Niobe" is pronounced "*nigh*-o-be," with the accent on the first syllable; "Penelope" is pronounced "pe-*nell*-o-pe," with the accent on the second syllable; and "Psyche" is pronounced "*sigh*-ke," with the accent on the first syllable. You can learn who those ladies were, by looking up their histories in an encyclopedia or a classical dictionary.

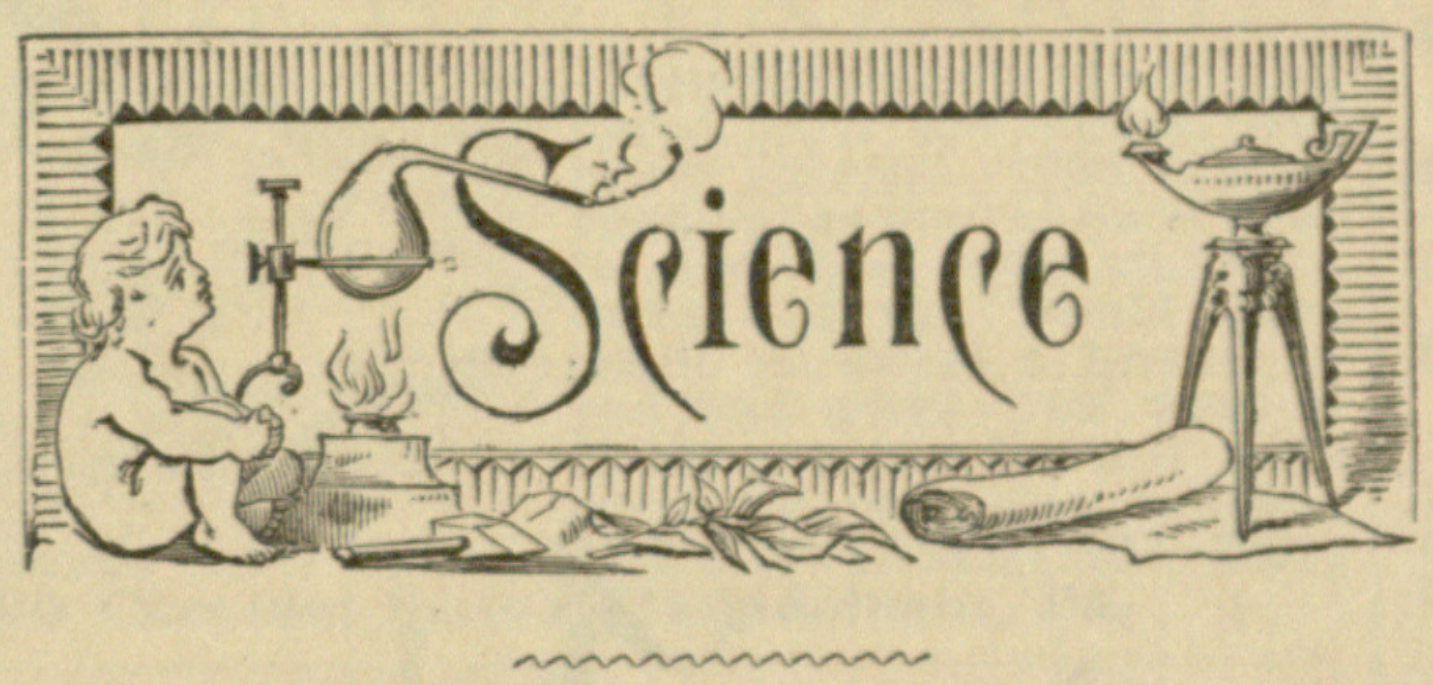
New York.—A corvette is a sloop-of-war, of not more than twenty guns, and ranks next below a frigate. The word is French, and signifies "a leap," and is akin to our English word "curvet."

Scarlet.—A lead comb is frequently and successfully used to darken the color of hair which happens to be more brilliant than pleasing.

Constant R. writes: "Will you please inform me of the meaning of the name 'Sophia?'" *Answer:* It means "wisdom."

Fifty-five writes: "On what day of the week did July 20, 1825, come?" *Answer:* Wednesday.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*



Science

Professor Heilprin, the geographer, in an article entitled "The Culminating Point of the North American Continent," discusses the observations as to the loftiest four summits of Mexico, and comes to the following determinations as to their heights: Peak of Orizaba, 18,205 feet; Popocatapetl, 17,523 feet; Ixtaccihuatl, 16,960 feet; Nevado de Toluca, 14,954 feet. The restoration of the Peak of Orizaba to the first place among Mexican mountains, and its increased altitude, Professor Heilprin states, open up the interesting question as to what constitutes the culminating point of the North American continent. He analyzes the data on which the palm has been accorded to Mount St. Elias owing to the height of 19,464 feet given to to it by the observer Dall. He points out that this determination was made "at sea," one hundred and twenty seven miles distant. In view of the reduction of height made by the recent Alaska expedition, Professor Heilprin's concluding words are worthy of attention. "In view of the broad divergence existing in these later measurements, and the fact that all earlier determinations give less than 18,000 feet for the height of Mount St. Elias, geographers will probably consider the question of absolute height as still an open one. That the mountain closely approximates the giants of the Mexican plateau is almost certain, but it seems equally probable that its true position is after, and not before, the Peak of Orizaba," which would thus be the culminating peak of the North American continent.

A remarkable explosion of a locomotive boiler recently occurred on a New England railroad. According to an account in the *Scientific American*, the engine was an old one, having been built twenty-nine years ago. It was engaged in hauling freight trains. At the time of the accident it was pulling out a train of freight cars from the station, with the throttle full open and reversing lever dropped down, but was only moving slowly, as it was just starting. The engine had barely passed the station when the explosion occurred. Its violence is shown by the fact that it was heard at a distance of several miles from the scene. It is asserted that the noise was perceived six miles away in each direction. The outer shell was torn away in an irregular band or zone, after the accident pieces being found thrown in different directions. The tubes were bent and displaced, but few were drawn out of the tube sheets. The connecting rods, main rods and side rods were bent, the front driving axle was broken, and the cab was demolished. No signs of low water were reported. The rails under the engine were spread seven-eighths inch; the fence near the track for about fifty feet was blown down. Glass in all the houses near the scene was demolished, and bricks were thrown from a chimney three hundred feet away. After the explosion the engine ran one hundred and fifty feet and stopped.

Secretary of Agriculture Rusk has been some time engaged in organizing an expedition to explore the famous Death Valley in Colorado. This region is a veritable *terra incognita*. Water in the valley is unknown, and the expedition will carry water and food for mules and men. It is a question whether the animals will be able to survive the expedition. Two of the chief botanists of the department are at present working their way into the valley from Southern Nevada, while another expedition is on the march from Southern California. The two expeditions are expected to meet, if nothing goes wrong with them, at a point previously decided upon in the valley. There is reason to believe that there are rich gold and silver mines in the region named. The scientific men with the expedition will map the country and procure specimens of such animals and insects as exist there, if any do exist. Secretary Rusk regards the expedition as of great importance.

A writer in *The Country Gentleman* states that when the temperature of milk is reduced to 40 degrees or less, cream will come up within three to five hours. The butter made from such cream will not keep well, from the fact that too much caseine will be mingled with it. If the temperature of the milk is made to be 45 degrees and kept there for six hours, the cream will be likely to be all up. It certainly will be within twelve hours.

The development of teeth germs from infancy to mature life, a writer in the Pittsburg *Dispatch* thinks is one of the most interesting phases of human growth. Pass the finger along the tiny jaw of the newcomer. Not only is there nothing which presages future teeth, but the jaws themselves seem too delicate and frail to become the sockets for such hard-working portions of the anatomy. Yet we are assured that there are fifty-two teeth germs hidden there. Twenty of them are for the temporary teeth, with which, in due time, the child will begin to gnaw or chew his way through life; the others include the permanent set and the molars, none of which begin to make their presence known until the child is six years old, and the "wisdom" teeth do not usually appear until about the age of eighteen. The little pulp germ grows and develops till it approximates the shape of the tooth it is to become; then it begins to calcify, forming the dentine part of the crown, while the enamel is deposited by an independent process. The surface of the crown attains its full size before the process of elongation commences. Then, gradually it pushes its way outward through the gum, absorbing its tissue as it advances, till the pure white enamel peeps out.

An authority on ventilation maintains that a cemented floor under the whole area of a house is a sanitary necessity, because the "air in soils" is more or less impure at best. There is no excuse for building underground apartments in the country. They are never wholesome anywhere, and if families are compelled by stringent reasons to live in the city, where basement dining-rooms and underground kitchens are the rule, they should endeavor to have an upper sitting-room, and live in it as much as possible. The very placing of a house on any ground and living in it under ordinary circumstances causes suctions into its interior of impure soil air, because the air of the house is warmer than the air beneath it, and this induces a rush of the cold air to the warmer house atmosphere. The concreted floor will, in a great measure, do away with this difficulty, but not altogether. Ventilation of cellars must, therefore, be attended to, no matter how clean and perfectly built they may be, in town or country. Annual lime whitewashing, an old custom, is decidedly a wholesome precaution, and every cellar should thus be treated, especially in the autumn, as the cellar will be kept closed more than in spring and summer.

The French submarine boat *Gymnote* was recently tried at Toulon, and demonstrated its ability to pass through a blockaded line and escape attention in spite of systematic efforts to watch, trace or discover its course. According to the *Revue Industrielle*, it plunged and remained under water forty minutes. It rose to the surface in a distance of more than two miles and a half from its point of departure, and had passed under the watched line of demarkation without being seen. After having ascertained where it was, it remerged to return. It again crossed the line, but this time two of the parties on the lookout for it got a glimpse of it, not, however, sufficiently distinct to enable them to trace and pursue it. The course of the boat was in both instances rectilinear.

Brass is, perhaps, the best known and most useful alloy. It is formed by fusing together copper and zinc. Different proportions of these metals produce brasses possessing very marked distinctive properties. The portions of the different ingredients are seldom precisely alike; these depend upon the requirements of various uses for which the alloys are intended.

◆

A GRAVE IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

De Ketchum: Heard the news at the club?
Hismark: No, what is it?
De Ketchum: Old Fuse has given up smoking.
Hismark: Actually?
De Ketchum: Yes; he was visiting some granite quarries, and he accidentally dropped his cigar ashes into a keg of blasting-powder.

◆

Myrtle: He's awfully attentive to her, you know.
Lilly: How far has it gone?
Myrtle: Very far, I'm afraid. He held her prayer-book upside down at church yesterday, and I'm sure I heard him say "a woman" instead of "amen!"

◆

"**Father**, do people buy snuff?"
"Yes, my child; why do you ask?"
"Well, then, why do people say they take it?"
Father (aside): "Thank Heaven, there is likely to be one genius in my family."

◆

Cora: I would wait ever so long for any man that could love me for myself alone.
Violet: What patience! And you have already waited so many years.

◆

Beaver: Harkins is a man who always holds fast to the truth.
Cleverly: Yes; I notice he never lets it escape him.

◆

A **Pretty** girl doesn't object to reflections on herself when they come from a looking-glass.

◆

Cobblers are eligible for medical diplomas, because they are skilled in the art of heeling.

◆

A **greedy** man should wear a plaid vest, so as to keep a check on his stomach.

◆

What interest does View pay Distance for lending him enchantment?

◆

Sometimes in a trade a man kicks when there is nothing to boot.

THE UDALER'S DAUGHTER.

BY AMELIA E. BARR.

Gray with the storms of centuries is the old Norse town of Kirkwall, the capital of a group of islands cut off from the rest of the world by the stormy Pentland Firth.

The French War was going on, and the Orkneys were favorite objects of the French privateers, for the people were rich in gold, and very fond of rich clothing and valuable ornaments. So the English government kept a garrison in Kirkwall, and a man-of-war that hunted the seas around; and what with the French prisoners and the Dutch skippers and the English soldiers and the native Orcadians, the streets were full of stir and queer, interesting life.

In those days, the greatest man around Kirkwall was Udaler, or Freeholder, Paul Thorso, forty years of age—kindly, but heart-full of his island prejudices. One morning in October, A. D. 1805, he might have been seen coming down the main street, his gigantic form jogging along on a rough Shetland pony, his feet raking the ground, and his prehistoric hat tied on the back of his head.

He stopped at the usual rendezvous—Peter Fae's warehouse—and had a kindly word and a firm grip for every one there, except a slim, dark, handsome Frenchman, who was leaning on a great cask of brandy, and chattering away in his imperfect English in an amusing way. Paul Thorso did not like Frenchmen, hence he offered him no handshake, still he could not resist the fascination of the foreigner's company. Besides, though a prisoner, it was well understood that Monsieur Victor Loubarreé was a gentleman and a great favorite of the commanding officer, Colonel Lucies.

This morning, too, Paul was in unusually good spirits; his son Hacon had just returned safely from a prosperous voyage to Iceland, and he intended giving a four-days' feast in consequence. He especially invited every one present except the Frenchman, and to him he said, frankly:

"Thou must excuse me stranger, I do not wish thee to come."

"Pardon, Monsieur Udaler, but I wish very much to come."

It was impossible to resist the good-natured tone and smile, and Monsieur Loubarreé won his way, although the udaler grumbled to himself about it as he rode home. To tell the truth, he had a very good reason for disliking Monsieur Loubarreé's visits. He feared that his daughter Elga liked him too well; but he resolved to make her brother Hacon a partner in his fears, and the girl would not dare, he thought, to oppose a twofold authority.

When he got home he forgot his anxiety; the house was already full of young girls, who were sitting in groups and chatting and knitting, or busily braiding straw; and Elga was passing from room to room looking after the spreading of the numerous tables and the preparation necessary for a large number of guests. Then, as the short day began to darken, the officers and other guests from Kirkwall arrived, and his duties as host made him forget his fatherly doubts.

He had seen Elga at the head of one table, and had been watching her fair, stately figure in every dance, and not once detected the obnoxious Frenchman near her. But toward the close of the evening, as the hilarity became more free and the guests scattered through the hall and parlors, he missed both of them together. He found them in the front court, walking slowly up and down under the united glory of a great white moon and brilliant aurora that shot spears of rosy light from every quarter toward the zenith.

As they turned and faced him, he was struck with the rarely diverse beauty of the two. Elga was fair and stately as a lily, and her bright, golden hair, falling over her white-down wrapping, had in that strange light a magical beauty. Victor's bronze skin, black eyes and lithe, graceful figure, he acknowledged to be equally fascinating, but it was a charm that he was unused to and distrusted. He was very angry, and the passionate pleading attitude of the dark, uplifted face, and the tender drooping of Elga toward it, was a wrong and an insult that he could hardly endure.

But all his traditions of hospitality forbade him, while Victor was his guest, to interfere; for this rough Northern gentleman had an instinct of chivalry for his guests almost oriental in its plenitude.

But when the feast was over, and the guests sent away with a "loving cup" and the "peace-word," he summoned Elga at once into his presence. She came in laughing merrily, her brother at her side. That was well also; it was time that Hacon knew the disgrace his sister contemplated for the ancient house of Thorso.

But Hacon sympathized with his sister, who avowed her love for Victor. The old Norseman was kind but firm, and closed the interview by saying to Elga:

"There is only one way for thee and for me—only one way; see thou walk in it."

The long winter passed; Elga made no appointments to meet her lover, but still they did meet occasionally. The udaler was busy all winter with his duties as host to some one or other, but Elga readily obtained permission to join parties of young people who were going to some other udaler's house for a week or two of merry-making, and Victor nearly always dropped in among them the second day. There was no understanding to this effect—Elga would have scorned an intrigue—and her intercourse with Victor was perfectly open and honest. If the udaler was ignorant of it, it was because he never asked and because all his friends naturally avoided a voluntary communication on what was known to be an unpleasant topic.

If, indeed, Paul Thorso had made any inquiries, he might have heard other news which would have been nearly as displeasing to him. Hacon's affection for the "handsome foreigner" had become a passion, and all Kirkwall knew that the young Norse gentleman spent most of his days in the garrison with the Frenchman.

Elga watched this friendship with pleasure; she knew Victor would hear everything about her from Hacon, and without many leading questions, the simple, good-hearted Hacon revealed all he knew about Victor. She was happy and hopeful, for she believed that the course of true love would run smooth eventually if people had patience with the little bit of crooked way found in every road; and she was not wrong.

One morning, in early spring, there was a very happy, good-natured crowd in Peter Fae's shop. The sky was calm and blue; the sea was calm and blue; and the lark and thrush were thrilling the warm, delicious air. Suddenly, a little lad ran breathlessly into the shop, and, touching Hacon, said:

"I'm bidden to tell thee, Thorso, there's an unco shoal o' ca'ing whales near the East Bay."

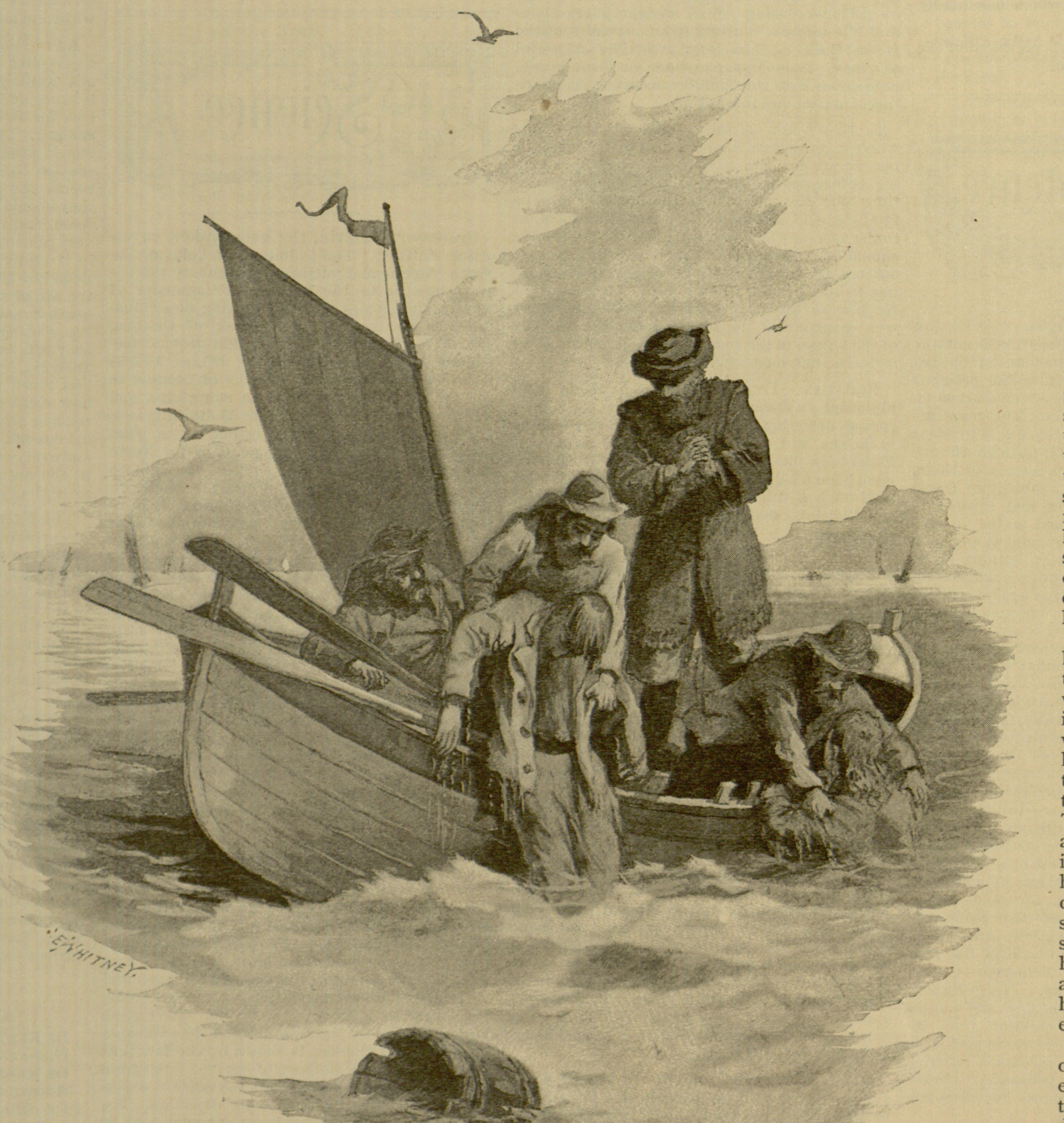
Of all information, this to the Orcadians is the most welcome and exciting. Men who had dozed all winter, and seemed hopelessly lazy and inert, leaped up like warriors; the dull, heavy faces were aglow with fire; and in a moment, one knew these were the genuine descendants of Thor and Odin and the old sea-kings. Armed with spears, pikes, bayonets, swords, knives, anything they could reach, they were soon surrounding the shoal with wild shouts, and driving them before them into the shallow bay. Many of the officers had joined the exciting chase, and Victor was among them.

Aided by the advancing tide, in a couple of hours, the whole shoal was floundering in shallow water, and a tremendous slaughter going on. The Frenchman was a transformed being; the contest with these unwieldy brutes stimulated to a frenzy the natural love of fight in him, and many a Norse seal-hunter paused in wonder at the rapidity and dexterity of his blows. Hacon kept close beside him. Hour after hour, the fight continued; the sea was a crimson sea, and the shouts of the men in the water and of the women and children on the shore blended terribly with the shrill cries of the wounded whales and the strange snorting and humming of the dying ones.

The Udaler Thorso had been as active as any, but not too busy to notice how the fight had transformed the Frenchman, and how his enthusiasm had kindled Hacon to deeds that amazed his father. Paul did not know how to lie, even to his own heart, and he said, frankly:

"Yon man, be he French or the de'il, is worthy to sit beside the best viking that ever sailed; indeed he is."

Toward evening, when nearly two hundred whales had been slain, and the people were busy drawing them to land, there was a sudden shout of terror mingled with the name of Hacon Thorso. The udaler leaped into a boat, and four men pulled him rapidly toward the spot. Then it was discovered that Hacon had leaped out of a boat to give the *coup de grâce* to a large whale, and had sunk, reappearing at some distance in an apparently drowning condition. Victor had immediately dived after him, and as the udaler approached, the Frenchman was striving against the tide and some under-current to keep Hacon's head above water till help reached them.



But the young men were exhausted with their eight hours' fight, and were almost at the mercy of the waves when the udaler's boat reached them. Hacon was insensible, and Victor became so immediately after being rescued. Thorso's house was only a quarter of a mile's pull, and thither the half-drowned men were carried. Hacon soon recovered, and in thirty hours was quite able to go and help in the cutting up and the division of the spoils. Victor remained many days upon the great lounge, bedded deep with seal-skins; but he was quite contented there; from it he could watch Elga in all her lovely household ways.

The udaler, with his great heart on fire with gratitude, acknowledged, as he watched the handsome face, its strange charm; and he was anxious also to acknowledge the great debt that he owed the savior of the last descendant of the Thorsos. Victor might have asked half his estate and got it, but he asked far more; he asked the hand of the daughter for the life of the son, and he placed his case so plausibly that Paul was half convinced of its justice, and sorely beset to know how to grant something equivalent.

He began first to demur, on the ground of their unequal birth. "Elga was of the noblest blood, the last daughter of a long line of Norse heroes." The Frenchman claimed a still higher nobility, and declaring that the marriage would make Elga a countess of the French empire, referred the udaler to Colonel Lucies. That gentleman confirmed Victor's statement, adding the significant fact that Loubarreé had been free to return to France for many months, and had endured the rigors of an Orcadian winter for the sole pleasure of being near Elga Thorso.

Colonel Lucies spoke warmly in favor of his friend; to tell the truth, he was amazed at Victor's admiration for a style of beauty, which, however dazzling to the dark Provençal, was not so remarkable to an Englishman accustomed to every shade of blonde loveliness. Neither could he understand the family-pride of Thorso; he certainly thought a French count a splendid match for an Orkney udaler's daughter. Hacon also warmly supported Victor's wishes, and before summer was over Elga's calm patience and cheerful obedience had their full reward. In the famous old cathedral of St. Magnus, Elga Thorso was married, amid a goodly company of Kirkwall magnates, to Victor, Count of Loubarreé, in Provence, France.

The udaler gave her a portion of £10,000, but it was remarked that she left it in Kirkwall Bank. Indeed, Elga had queer little prejudices, in spite of her virtue and good sense, and she said to Hacon: "It is Orkney gold, there is no call to carry it into an enemy's camp." Whereat the infatuated husband only smiled and answered that "madame, the countess, must always do what pleased her best."

So Elga went from ice-bound Orkney to grape-garlanded Provence, and her beauty there was a marvel, and Victor's admiration for his northern goddess increased yearly. She bore him two sons and two daughters. The boys inherited her beauty, and one of them her race's passion for the sea, but both died young—one fighting in Algeria, the other in the stormy Bay of Biscay. One daughter married a Provençal noble, the other married an English gentleman called Martin Creffell, who lived on the coast of Cumberland. With Mary Creffell (the only child of this couple) I went to school through many pleasant days.

It was in the year 1846 that Mary told me a young Orkney gentleman, a connection of her mother's family, was coming to see them. He was a fine young fellow called Biron Velzain, and he staid so long in the old Cumberland mansion that I was not at all surprised to hear of their engagement. It gave universal satisfaction, and to no one so much as to Grandmamma Elga, Countess of Loubarreé, who determined, though in her sixtieth year, to visit once more her daughter and her native land.

Biron and Mary were married in her presence, and after the ceremony she gave Mary as a wedding-gift the £10,000 and its interest which had been lying over forty years in Kirkwall Bank.

"It is Orkney gold, my dear," she said, "and you are going back to spend it in Orkney; that is right, you know."

Then she began talking with such enthusiasm of the land of her birth and her youth that Biron impulsively said:

"Mamma, why not go back with us for a little visit? Thy good father still lives, hale and happy; and Hacon's children and grandchildren will rejoice to see thee."

The idea pleased her and grew rapidly. A steamer was chartered at Whitehaven, and after a pleasant sail old Paul Thorso welcomed on Kirkwall pier his daughter Elga and his son-in-law Victor, his granddaughters, the Marchioness of Chélong and Mrs. Creffel, and his great-granddaughter and nephew, Mr. and Mrs. Biron Velzain.

The old men of these islands have a green old age, and Paul had preserved, though eighty years old, a large measure of all his faculties. No one enjoyed this six weeks' reunion more than he did. It was the Indian summer of his life, and after it was over he seemed satisfied with earth. At any rate, without suffering and without decay, he very soon afterward attained to look upon the beginning of eternal peace.

◆

The offer of $700 in prizes to those forming most words from "*Tadella Alloyed Zink Pen*," in the number of the *Ledger* for November 29th, has attracted so many replies that the offer is repeated in another column of this issue. Those answering this advertisement stand on equal footing with those that replied to the former. More replies have been received from the advertisement in the *Ledger* than from any other advertisement of equal cost.—*Adv.*

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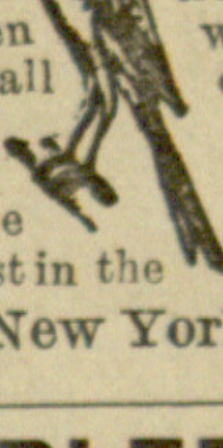

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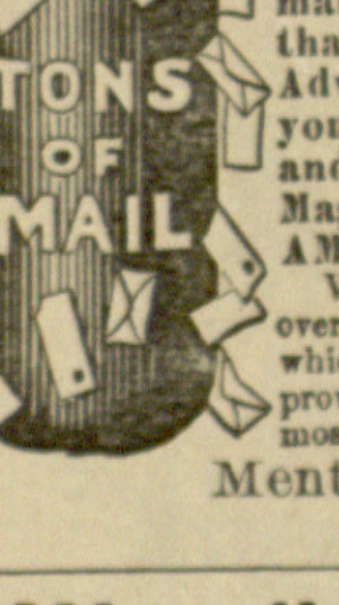

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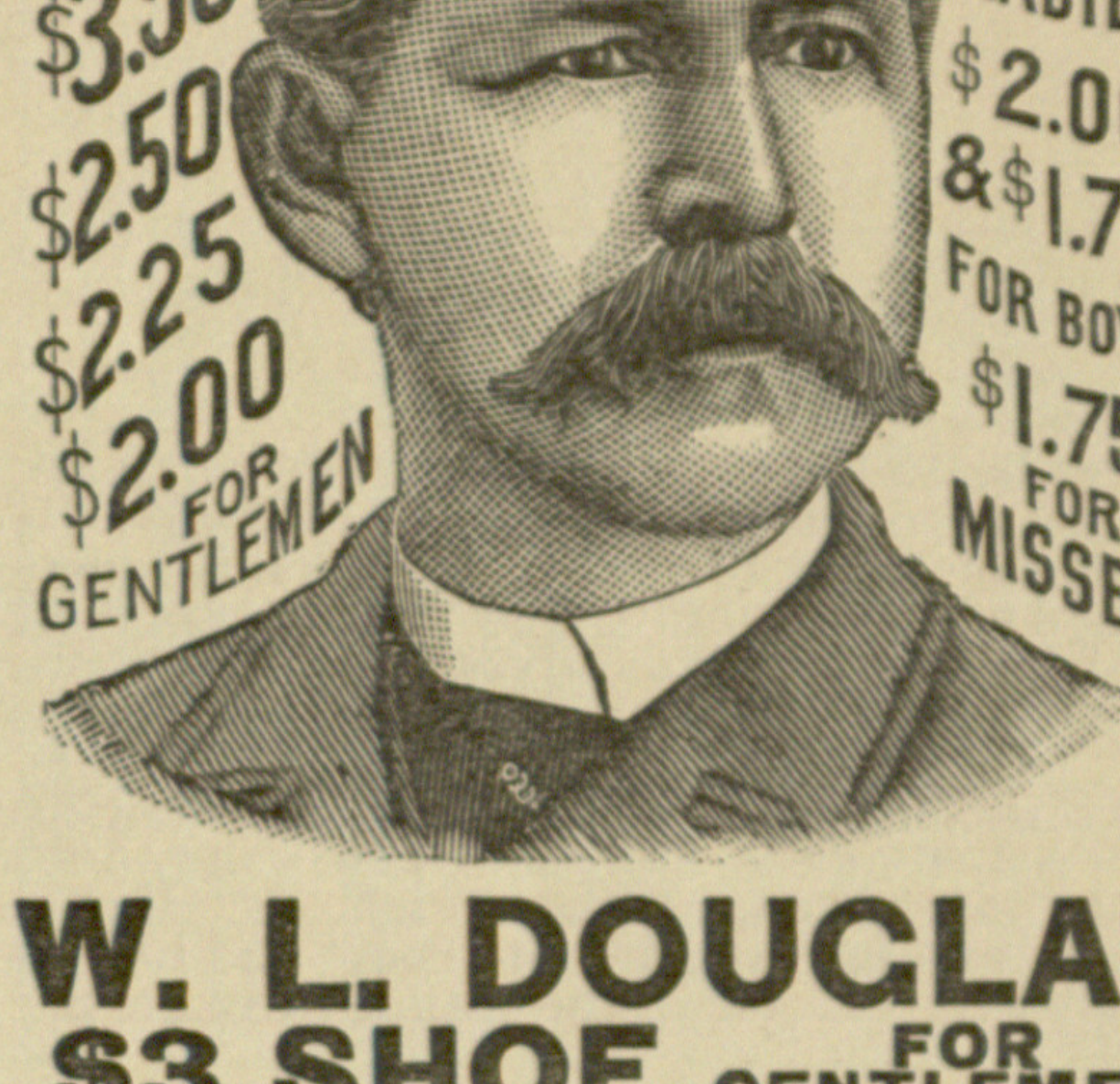

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THE WOLF-GIRL.

BY THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH.

This legend is current, in some form, in all the northern countries of Europe, and similar stories may be found in the folk-lore of the East. In some cases, the enchanted woman takes the form of a serpent or a dragon; and, in others, is hideously scarred, or otherwise repulsively deformed. It is always a kiss, generally the third given, which breaks the charm and restores the victim to her original beauty. Occasionally, the sex is reversed, as in the instances of Beauty and the Beast, or the Brown Bear of Norway. In these last, however, it is positive affection, and not the mere semblance of it, which works the deliverance. There is a characteristic anachronism in the usual Irish legend which introduces a Christian priest to perform the marriage service, although the Fianna were undoubtedly Pagans, and their last chief, Fionn MacCumhail, was slain more than five centuries before the advent of St. Patrick. Filial affection, like a respect for female purity, holding so high a place among the ancient Irish—and in that respect the race has not degenerated—I have chosen to effect the release of the father through the self-sacrificing effort of the son.

THE Fianna sat at banquet there,
From ovens drawn the heath,
And heaped on platters huge the meats
That steaming lay beneath—
The mighty joints of cattle black,
Leaf-wrapped the lake-caught fish;
While bowls of *meadh* went circling round
For those who drink might wish.

Foul-mouthed, bald-headed Conan sought
By coarsest jests to glean
Some scattered grains of thoughtless mirth—
"Where now," he cried, "is Fionn?
Some damsel lures our gray-haired chief
From comradeship to stray;
And makes him laggard at the feast,
Who still is first at fray.

"We miss our Diarmuid much to-day;
His sword was of the best;
And well as that his hand could wield,
His tongue could hurl a jest;
But now, with much of meat and *meadh*,
The Fianna all are dumb;
And even peerless Oscur here
Is long of face and glum."

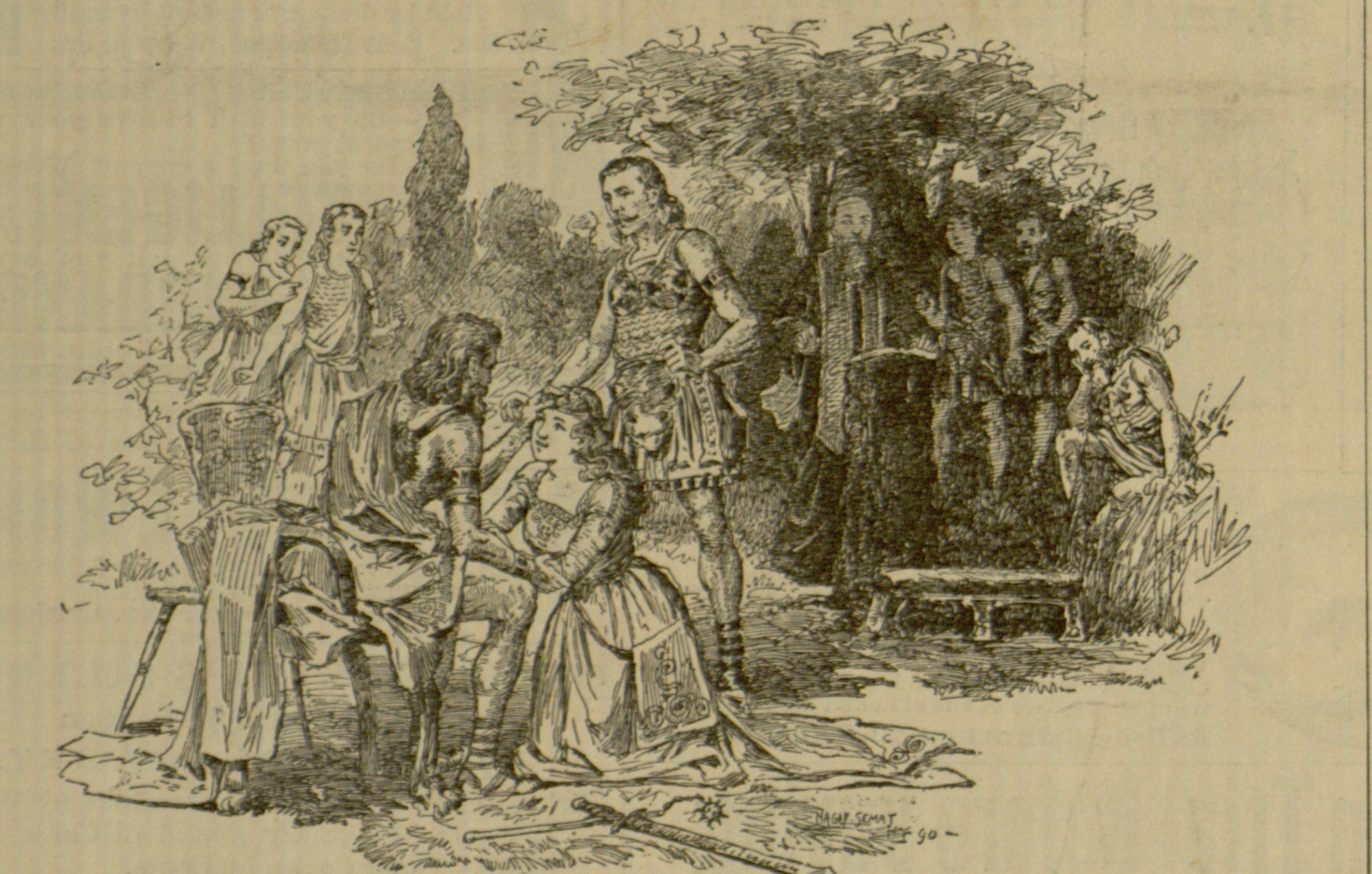
"Be silent, ribald!" Oscur said;
"Such gibes are out of place;
I have a cause for looks forlorn;
Your words are scant of grace.

"'Henceforth no strength be in your frame,
No courage in your heart;
A beardless stripling in the fight
Shall play a manlier part.
Henceforward pointless be your spear,
And dull of edge your sword,
Till I am wedded by your son
Despite my form abhorred.

"Her curse has struck; a weakling now,
To exile hence I go."
He turned, but Oisin stayed his steps—
"No, father dear, not so!
Sweet Saebh, my mother, was your wife;
Here with our comrades stay;
And have a priest ere I return,
For Oisin weds to-day."

Forth Oisin strode to Glann-na-Gael,
And at its mouth beheld
A woman of such fearful mien,
That horror she compelled.
She lacked not grace, though clad in rags,
And moved with supple limb;
But on her neck and shoulders wore
A wolf's head, fierce and grim.

The jaws were strong and told of blood,
The fangs were long and white,
Out lolled the red and dripping tongue—
It was a loathly sight;
But when the Wolf-Girl spake, the voice,
To Oisin's great surprise,
Was gentle, sweet and tender-toned,
Despite those cruel eyes.



Life gloomy seems as here I sit,
For eighteen years to-day
Have passed since Lir, the Druid vile,
Stole Aebh, my child, away.

"Pursuit was made, but all in vain;
We searched the country round;
None know if she be living or dead;
No trace of her was found;
This day each year my soul is sad,
The sunbeams give no light;
I feel no pleasure in the feast,
No longing for the fight."

There as he spake came slowly Fionn,
With faint and tottering pace,
And grimly beckoned Oisin then,
And drew him from the place.
A gloom came over all around,
Even Conan had no word,
As earnestly and silently
The son and sire conferred.

"My son," said Fionn, "your sire is weak,
Nor could his life to save
Find needed force to hurl the spear,
Or strength to wield the glaive."
"Whence comes such weakness," Oisin asked,
"Oh, sire, and chief of men?"
"I fell this morn within her power,
The Wolf-Girl of the Glen."

O'erspread with pallor Oisin's face,
As Fionn rehearsed the tale—
"She met me at the pile of rocks
Before an Glann-na-Gael.
I strove to spurn the wretched thing,
And bade her from me flee;
She only growled and bared her fangs,
And spake these words to me:

"What seeks young Oisin here," she asked,
"Since Oisin it must be,
For one so loathly to the eye,
None else would care to see?
You love me not, you could not love—
Your coming here alone
To free a father from the spell
By magic o'er him thrown."

"I come," said Oisin, shuddering,
"To do as you demand;
It is not love or heart you seek;
You ask, I give my hand.
I swear to wed with you before
The Fianna all to-day,
And what so *geasa* you impose
Will faithfully obey."

A hideous sight that wolfish head,
A thing to scare and harm;
Yet, as the tears fell from her eyes,
He felt a secret charm;
Such gentle way, such silvery tones,
Such lithe and subtle grace—
Alas! to find them illy joined
To such a loathly face.

He took her gently by the hand,
And wondered at the sight—
A woman with a head so foul,
And hands so fair and white.
But ere with fitting courtesy
The Wolf-Girl thence was led,
She paused, and to the listening youth,
In gentle tones she said:

"As soon as we shall wedded be,
My first and sole command—
You bow to East and West and North,
And kiss me on each hand:
And then, despite these fangs and lips,
Lout lowly to the South,
Then clasp your arm around my waist,
And kiss me on the mouth.

"For thus and thus, and thus alone,
You break the potent spell,
That from the Druid's wrath through me
Upon your father fell;
And thus and thus, and thus alone,
You may another free,
If, where the Fiannan heroes are,
You give me kisses three."

They came to where the Fianna sat;
The priest was waiting there,
While weakling Fionn far sat apart,
With dull and gloomy air.
Quoth Conan, with a grin: "Such bride
No bridegroom dare abuse;
Some wives have ready finger-nails,
But this her teeth might use."

Amazed the stout companions all
When Oisin stood beside,
As blithe as though her face were fair,
His weird and fearful bride;
And heard him tell the trembling priest
To speed the nuptial rite,
With voice as gay as though the fere
Had been his heart's delight.

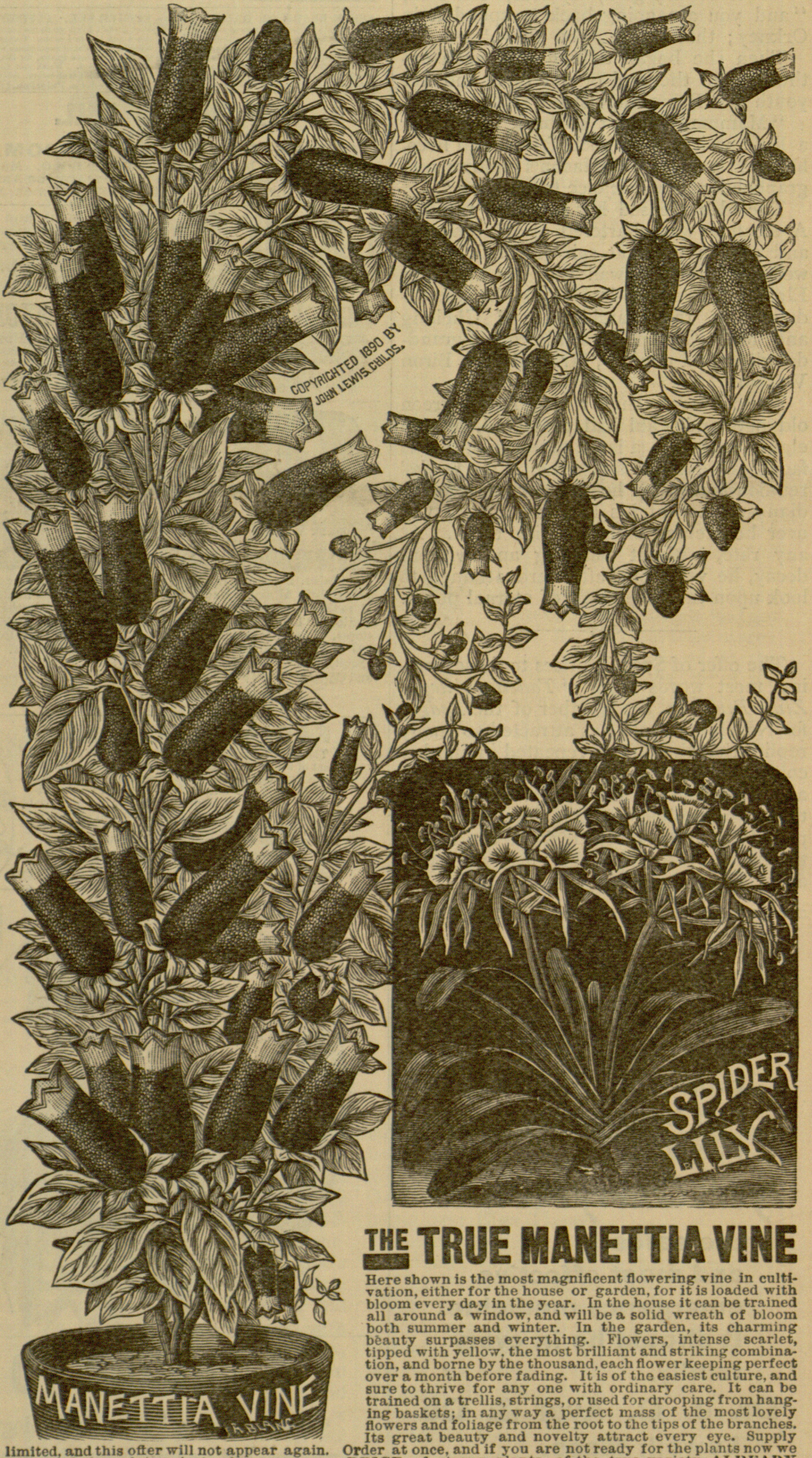
With mistletoe and mystic sign,
The priest had made them one;
But still the Fianna silent sat
When all was featly done,
And no one dared salute the bride;
Even Conan made a pause
Before those wild and cruel eyes,
Those fanged and bony jaws.

But Oisin there, before them all,
Bowed north and east and west,
And fearlessly his shuddering lips
Upon her hands, he pressed;
A tremulous motion shook the bride;
He bowed him to the South,
Then clasped his arms around her waist,
And kissed her on the mouth.

A thrill ran through the comrades here—
What wondrous thing was this?
What transformation strange had come
Upon that triple kiss!
To silk, bedecked with jewels bright,
Changed were the rags she wore;
And she, as lovely as the dawn,
A Wolf-Girl now no more.

In speechless rapture Oisin stood;
Cried Oscur as he rose:
"Oh, Una's living image! come
To bless my life-time's close!
Speak! Tell me who you are, fair bride!"
She knelt at Oscur's knee—
"One time the Druid stole me. Aebh,
Your daughter—I am she!"

Sprang Fionn to feet with lusty bound,
His olden strength returned;
New vigor filled his stalwart frame;
New fire within him burned.
He backward drew his ponderous spear
And hurled it at an oak;
The spear-head found the hither side,
The shaft in splinters broke.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